

# Research and Development **IT-based innovation in tourism and shipping.**

In order to remain competitive in an environment characterised by new technologies and dynamic markets, the TUI Group had to steadily further develop its services portfolio but also its internal processes. Development activities focused on the use of new information technologies and an expansion of the service range in order to secure sustained growth of the Group.

In tourism, the Group continually expanded its online product portfolio and adjust it to new technologies. At the same time, concepts for new websites were developed in order to be able to handle the growing number of online bookings. Activities in shipping focused on the continual extension of electronic data and information exchange with customers and the promotion of the high IT standards applied throughout the world.

## Innovation in tourism

In the completed financial year, innovation in TUI Travel PLC mainly related to the Mainstream and Online Destination Services Sectors. Both Sectors primarily expanded the functions available on the respective websites. In addition, the Mainstream Sector expanded its travel portfolio.

### *Web-based hotel evaluation*

In the Northern Europe Sector the design of the Thomson homepage was expanded to include hotel evaluation facilities, provided by Holidays Uncovered and TripAdvisor, the internet platforms offering customer evaluation systems. Due to the introduction of comprehensive internet applications for travel agencies in the UK, the travel shop staff can now engage in interactive sales dialogue with their customers, showing them evaluations and videos of the hotels on offer. The system has been launched in 88 travel shops for the pilot phase and is planned to be rolled out to all shops in 2008.

### *New web sites*

In the Central Europe sector, the Airtours and TUIfly websites were redesigned and provided with additional functions. Furthermore, the websites of numerous TUI companies were revised and extended. In the Northern Europe sector, an online guide was introduced, allowing customers to book e.g. excursions and restaurants before departure.

### *Contour reservation system*

Following the introduction of the new reservation system Contour in TUI France in 2006, the system was rolled out to tour operator Nouvelles Frontières in the completed financial year. Apart from a last-minute search engine, the platform offers individual packaging functions for holiday tours. The new travel brochure for the 2008 summer was also implemented on the platform.

**Online Destination Services**

A uniform revenue management system is being developed for the Online Destination Services Sector. Its purpose will be to optimise internal processes by means of extended functions. To this end, a detailed concept was devised and a pilot phase prepared in 2007. And the introduction of a new booking migration system improved data exchange with hotel systems in the Online Destination Services Sector. Thanks to a new interface, bookings can now be directly exported into the data bases operated by the suppliers.

**'Toscana Resort Castelfalfi'**

In March 2007, the largest tourism project in Tuscany was initiated with the purchase of a plot of land in that region. Based on the 'Land Fleesensee' project model, the 'Toscana Resort Castelfalfi' is to be built on land covering an area of eleven square kilometres.

**Electronic data exchange**

### Innovation in shipping

As in previous years, Hapag-Lloyd focused its development activities in particular on information technology, primarily the development of the Freight Information System (FIS), i.e. the internal processing system, and the ongoing expansion of the e-business sector. With the integrated workflow system, workflows are easier to interlink worldwide. Continuous improvements in IT systems strongly support efficiency enhancements.

**FIS**

With FIS Documentation/Invoice, a newly developed system was introduced for the preparation of freight documents and invoices. It enables the central electronic filing of freight documents and thus facilitates paperless transactions by means of a largely automated process for the preparation of consignment notes on the basis of electronically received shipping instructions.

The FIS Contract & Fleet System controls all changes in the container fleet. The new FIS module focuses on selectively returning leased containers to the leasing companies. The containers are identified in transit and channelled to the return sites. Should any deviations occur, the workflow system automatically informs the users. The fleet is thus easier to control so that leased containers can be used more selectively and efficiently in order to cushion seasonal peaks.

**E-business**

In order to further improve the exchange of data and information with customers and suppliers, Hapag-Lloyd made changes to its website. Its homepage was optimised so that customers now immediately recognise any information of relevance to transportation. Direct links connect the homepage with underlying modules, enhancing the user-friendliness of the new system.