

Berlin, 25 August, 2015.
For Immediate Release

TOURIST DOLLARS: THE SECRET INGREDIENT IN ALEXA'S RECIPE FOR SUCCESS

In the retail sector a sales dip is routine during the summer months.

But there's always an exception. And in this case it's when your mall is located at the heart of a buzzing European capital.

Berlin's ALEXA Shopping Center bucks the seasonal trough by unleashing the power of the tourist dollar.

Now 49% of ALEXA's August fashion sales are to tourists.

The German capital is officially the biggest tourist magnet in the country and the third most popular tourist destination in the whole of Europe after London and Paris.

Tourist footfall at the Center has risen by more than a third in three years and continues to grow year on year.

But tourism is not just a key footfall driver in the summer.

As a year-round visitor destination, Berlin provides a rich customer resource to ALEXA tenants twelve months a year.

Cashing in on that tourist dividend has ensured that ALEXA remains the capital's number one shopping destination.

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The Center was an instant hit with Berliners when it sprang up in Alexanderplatz eight years ago.

16 million shoppers every year testify to that.

But the Center's famous location has now brought it to the attention of the rest of the world.

Alexanderplatz has become to Berlin what the Champs Elysees is to Paris, Piccadilly Circus to London, and Times Square to the Big Apple.

That status was recognised in July 2015 when ALEXA was awarded a coveted "Certificate of Excellence" by TripAdvisor. With 200 million user comments, TripAdvisor is the biggest ratings platform for travellers worldwide.

In other words, ALEXA is now a must-visit destination.

Asked why she was shopping in ALEXA Ji-Min Park, a 25 year old secretary from Seoul, South Korea, said:

"If you're visiting Berlin you have to come here. When I go home my mum will ask if I saw Alexanderplatz - she wouldn't believe me if I said 'no!' Once you're in the square it's great to go shopping, and the mall is right here".

It's easy to understand Ji-Min's point.

Checkpoint Charlie, museums, galleries, bars and leisure destinations are just a few steps away – as is Berlin's most iconic structure, the former East German TV tower.

Attractions like these on your doorstep give the mall high visibility amongst visitors from both inside and outside Germany.

And you can't argue with the statistics.

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Remarkably, tourists now make up 39% of Berlin's year-round overnight population - and nearly half of that total comes from abroad.

Whilst the city is a major destination for tourists from all round the globe, the UK, USA and Italy account for 26% of foreign visitors.

ALEXA tenants have become keenly aware of how to turn tourism to their advantage, among them Tino Worrack, the G-Star Store Manager at ALEXA.

“We are an international brand, so wherever they come from people know who we are. And that means guaranteed high footfall figures right through the year.”

Of course, tenants are happy whoever is buying.

But some tourists are even more attractive than others.

Exit surveys at the mall found that visitors on holiday from outside Europe spend on average €10 more per person than shoppers from EU countries.

The biggest hitters of all are the Americans, whose average spend is over €80 each.

Chinese spending comes not far behind.

This is particularly significant as Chinese tourism to Europe is continuing to grow steadily year-on-year.

Tino Worrack, the manager of G-Star at ALEXA, takes a highly practical view of the advantages tourist shoppers bring - and knows from experience how best to exploit them.

“People always talk about the importance of social media, apps and all the digital marketing tools. But the best marketing strategy of all is ALEXA's location on Alexanderplatz. That, and excellent staff who can also speak good English! It's all about knowing your target group”.

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A key target group is now tourists - and among that group retailers are most excited about 16-35 year olds.

Berlin is particularly popular with young people, exactly those most likely to shop while on vacation.

The German capital ranks third in the "Youthful Cities Index 2015" which assesses a city's attractiveness for people under 30.

Only New York and London received better scores.

This 16-35 demographic makes up more than two thirds (69%) of those visiting the city.

And with two and quarter million tourists a month, that is a lot of purchasing power.

ALEXA retailers are particularly upbeat about this connection with younger shoppers.

They point to a statistic from the exit surveys that goes some way to explaining the surge in tourist spend: over half of their purchases are unplanned.

Oliver Hanna, ALEXA's General Manager since opening day, has worked hard to build the Center's tourist profile over 8 years.

"ALEXA's footfall actually goes up during the holiday season. Even better - and perhaps explaining the leap in sales - is the fact that these tourists are holiday happy!

You know the feeling: you're on holiday, you want to enjoy yourself, be spontaneous!"

Unsurprisingly, Fashion and Accessories are the biggest draw for tourists visiting ALEXA.

This fits with the city's reputation as Europe's "Capital of Cool", the recognised centre of the country's fashion industry, and host to Berlin's twice-annual Fashion Week.

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ALEXA's design and architecture is themed around the hedonistic "Roaring Twenties" - an age when Berlin carved a reputation as the world's exotic hotspot.

Now the city is thriving once again, it's set to surpass that glorious heyday.

And whilst it remains a top choice for tourists, Berlin's premier mall will continue to be one of its star attractions.

-----ENDS----- **(Note to Editors: Background Information follows.....)**

ALEXA: BACKGROUND CENTER INFORMATION FOR US/UK MEDIA

Since opening in September 2007 on Alexanderplatz in the heart of Berlin, ALEXA has become the most visited Shopping and Leisure Center in the city.

With 185 units, including a 15 restaurant Food Court and an exciting range of Leisure operators, the four-level mall has proved consistently popular with both local shoppers and tourists.

ALEXA is now firmly established as one of Germany's most successful shopping destinations and a "must-have" location for a wide range of top international brands.

Around 16 million customers visit every year.

The Centre's architectural theme is based on the "Roaring Twenties" Art Deco style, a golden age of glamour, excitement and indulgence.

The design reflects ALEXA's mission: to make shopping a completely different experience.

A seemingly endless catalogue of celebrity visits and live performances are key components of that mission.

Stars including Backstreet Boys, Rihanna, 50 Cent, David Beckham, Leona Lewis have all made personal appearances, which has helped to cement ALEXA's reputation as Germany's "Center of Stars".

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ALEXA offers retailers 56.559 m² of Gross Lettable Area.

Key tenants include: Media Markt, Edeka, ZARA, Rossmann, Thalia, Intersport, H&M, Jack&Jones, Deichmann, Starbucks.

Seven days a week, ALEXA's top floor features "STRIKE LANES" 10 Pin Bowling Lounge; "SUPERFIT" Gym - open 24 hours a day; and the massive "LOXX" Cityscape and Model Railway Exhibition which showcases Berlin's most famous Landmarks-in-Miniature on a scale of 1:87.

In summer 2015 ALEXA welcomed CLAUTROPHOBIA Leisure Experience, the first location in Germany for this fast-emerging international brand.

The Center is located at Berlin's busiest public transport interchange.

Connections are outstanding with hundreds of trains, subways, trams and buses stopping every hour of the day and late into the night.

For those travelling by car, ALEXA sits alongside one of Berlin's major arterial roads and offers on-site underground parking for 1600 vehicles.

KEY FACTS:

Opened: 12 September 2007

Address: Grunerstraße 20, 10179 Berlin

ALEXA is owned by Union Investment Real Estate GmbH (91%) and Sonae Sierra, Portugal (9%).

Leasing and Centre Management is the responsibility of Sonae Sierra, Germany.

STATISTICAL SOURCES FOR PRESS RELEASE

Sonae Sierra Market Intelligence Department. Alexa Tourism Survey.
Office for Statistics: Berlin-Brandenburg Monthly Reports