

Internet redefining Expo's role, content

MY EXPO | CHEN SHUAI

Before I visited the Expo Garden, I had been to several European countries, as well as many cities inside the United Kingdom, so I saw the Expo as an opportunity to compare Europe with other countries and continents.

I also expected to learn how different countries see themselves, or how they wish to market themselves in China.

From 1851, when the first World Expo was held in London, until the 1990s, the event has served as a platform of exchange for countries to show off their advanced or representative goods and commodities.

However, the World Expo has seen its influence wane over the last two decades, especially with the advent of the information era. As the Internet has become the most convenient and efficient platform for exchanging information, countries need to exhibit something more tangible — things that cannot so easily be shown in the virtual

world — in order to keep the Expo a valid and credible event.

At Expo 2010 Shanghai, I have found that most countries are marketing what they are proud of, whether it is their natural environment, their sights and attractions, or their public policies.

As Chinese are becoming increasingly wealthy, investment opportunities are being marketed in the country now more than ever. The world at large is very aware of this and a number of pavilions have been promoting their country's high living standards.

Many pavilions also highlight their country's favorable policies and convenient services for tourists and investors.

The majority of Chinese visitors to the Expo 2010 Shanghai would probably not have considered living or investing overseas, or even researching such subjects online. So, for them, this way of introducing the pavilions has been both informative and appealing.

Furthermore, the domestic Chinese econ-

omy has benefited a lot from the Expo 2010 Shanghai, which has been billed as the most expensive World Expo in the event's history.

However, if all of the operational costs are taken into account, the event is probably going to be a huge money loser in the short term. This will hold true until the Chinese Government, and other participating governments, recoup their investments in terms of tourism and trade. But, in the long-term, the Expo is likely to show that the benefits it brings far outweigh the costs.

Expo 2010 Shanghai has also exposed Chinese consumers and investors to a wide range of new choices. The Urban Best Practices Areas (UBPA), the newest addition to the World Expo, is a case in point. It offers ecologically friendly solutions to problems relating to urbanization.

From producing energy-saving light bulbs to hydraulic power projects, companies have shown that they are playing a significant role in building better cities and more sustainable lifestyles.



PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

Chen Shuai poses for photos in the Expo Garden.

Chen Shuai is a 24-year-old Expo tourist from Ningbo, Zhejiang province. He holds a master's degree in management from the University of Glasgow, UK.

HSBCSPECIAL

Europe's Ryder Cup stars eye HSBC Champions title



GETTY IMAGES / WGC-HSBC CHAMPIONS

Ireland's Pádraig Harrington has confirmed his attendance at next month's World Golf Championships-HSBC Champions in Shanghai.

England's Luke Donald, Ireland's Pádraig Harrington and Rory McIlroy of Northern Ireland have confirmed they will compete at the World Golf Championships-HSBC Champions at the Sheshan International Golf Club in Shanghai from Nov 4-7.

This puts them in contention for the prestigious title with their Ryder Cup teammates Lee Westwood and Ian Poulter of England, Northern Ireland's Graeme McDowell and Martin Kaymer of Germany.

England's Paul Casey, who

narrowly missed qualifying for this year's European Ryder Cup team, will also be there. He will be looking to end his season with an emphatic win at the fourth and final WGC of 2010.

World No 1 Tiger Woods and defending champion Phil Mickelson, ranked world No 3, are also confirmed. South Africa's Louis Oosthuizen, the 2010 Open Champion, will be joining the Americans, as will their compatriot Hunter Mahan, who triumphed at this year's Bridgestone Invitational, another WGC event.

Elevated to the illustrious WGC tier of events for the first time, the HSBC Champions has attracted the strongest field ever seen in Asia, with seven of the world's top 10 and 20 of the world's top 30 golfers.

World No 8 Donald, who played a crucial part in the European team's victory this month by winning three out of four points in Wales, is looking for his first WGC win to cap off a fantastic year.

"After an amazing week at the

Ryder Cup, I am really looking forward to the rest of the season and especially playing in the WGC-HSBC Champions, having missed out last year," he said. "I really liked the Sheshan Course, and having finished tied 14th in 2006, I know that I can do well on it.

"I think it is great that the World Golf Championships have made it part of their series, as Asia plays an ever more important part of global golf."

Three-time Major champion Harrington has enjoyed a confidence boost from Europe's Ryder Cup success, and is thrilled to have qualified.

"It feels great to be part of the winning Ryder Cup team, and I hope it will be a turning point in my season as I look towards the rest of the year," he said.

"I really want to get back in the winner's circle soon, and I would love it to be at the prestigious WGC-HSBC Champions. I have played at Sheshan every year since the inaugural event in 2005, and it is a course I like.

"I really enjoy visiting Shanghai and love the enthusiasm of the Chinese fans, so I look forward to returning every year. I've had some pretty good finishes there, but against a field of such quality, I know I will need four great rounds to win my first WGC event."

World No 9 McIlroy, fresh from his successful Ryder Cup debut, described playing in such a strong field as a special experience.

"Last year was not only the first time the HSBC Champions had World Golf Championships status, but also my first time playing at Sheshan International Golf Club," he said.

"It was every inch a WGC event, from the world-class field assembled to the immaculately prepared course. And, as always, HSBC did a fantastic job in looking after the players.

"For all that, I am most looking forward to playing in front of the fantastic Chinese fans, as they created a unique atmosphere which really helped me deliver my final round of 63, which was one of my best of the year."