

[GOLDMAN] THAN

BUSINESS

7DAYS

Sach's embattled CEO Lloyd Blacklein

Press bashing has no tourism impact



DE LUXE DESTINATION: Giorgio Armani (left) at the opening of Armani Hotel Dubai last week, one of the many high-end hotels that are a top draw for tourists

Dubai retains its standing as top luxury holiday getaway

location and that proximity to a shopping mall was an important factor when selecting a hotel.

Following the announcement by Dubai World late last year that it was seeking a standstill and restructuring on some \$26 billion of debt, Dubai received an onslaught of negative press attention and heavy criticism

particularly from the UK, which is a huge tourism feeder market for the emirate.

One commentator described Dubai at the time as "less like Manhattan in the sun than Iceland in the desert".

Gaurav Sinha, managing director of Insignia speaking ahead of the opening of Arabian Travel Market

the region's biggest tourism convention, today, said: "It is highly encouraging that, inspite of negative coverage... tourists continue to recognise Dubai as an attractive and popular destination and it has not dented our reputation as a luxury holiday getaway".

Underlining the attraction of the luxury tourism market in Dubai, fashion icon Giorgio Armani choose the emirate and the World's tallest tower, the Burj Khalifa, as the location for his first-ever hotel, which he inaugurated last week

THE Dubai tourism industry has managed to shrug off the battering in the international press following the Dubai World debt issue to retain its status as a top luxury destination.

According to a survey of Association of British Travel Agents (ABTA) members, commissioned by the Dubai-based travel advisory Insignia, 90 per cent of respondents do not believe the negative press surrounding Dubai's economy has affected travel bookings.

Over two thirds of ABTA members also said Dubai is classed as a luxury