

# Guizhou province opens itself up to a rich world of opportunities

Cornucopia of companies have made their way there via its expos

By YUAN SHENGGAO

Through a rich and diverse variety of expos, the south-western province of Guizhou has attracted a cornucopia of companies and talented professionals from home and abroad seeking out fresh business opportunities.

One of them is Andrea Cavattoni, president of the Verona Stone Industry Association of Italy.

"I was surprised by the number of suppliers and buyers when I participated in the third Guizhou International Stone Expo," said Cavattoni, who is also an Italian stone product supplier.

He exhibited his marble products at the expo, held in Anshun in Guizhou province on Aug 26.

He said he could not imagine that there were so many opportunities before he went to Anshun.

Cavattoni said Italy was rich in marble resources and is also one of the most competitive countries in producing stone products, accounting for half of the products on international markets.

"I was impressed by the Guizhou officials who gave me a warm invitation when they held a promotional event in Italy, so I decided to take part in the fair," he added.

"My company will select one of the local businesses as a partner," he said.

"We will export raw materials and advanced technology to produce and sell products in China, which we truly believe will boost our profits."

Statistics from the event's organizing committee show that more than 1,500 companies have showcased their products via the three stone expos held to date, and agreements for more 2,000 projects valued at 100 billion yuan (\$15 billion) were signed in total.

According to an official from Anshun, the stone expo has become a comprehensive platform to promote communications within the stone industry, and it has also become the biggest expo for stone products in southwest China.

In addition, the China (Guizhou) International Alcoholic Beverage Expo, is the only one in China recognized by the Global Association of the Exhibition Industry, or UFI.

With the expo, Guizhou continues to promote its alcoholic beverage industry and works with global players to boost the



The China International Big Data Industry Expo is one of the key events helping Guizhou to boost its high-tech industries.

LI SENG / FOR CHINA DAILY



Guizhou International Alcoholic Beverage Expo is the only UFI-recognized event in Guizhou. YANG JUN / CHINA DAILY



Business reps from home and abroad perform transactions via mobile apps during the Guizhou International Expo. YANG JUN / CHINA DAILY

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Andrea Cavattoni, Italian stone product supplier

local economy, according to the event's organizers.

Another heavyweight expo held by Guizhou is the China International Big Data Industry Expo, which was upgraded to a national-level expo this year.

It has attracted the participation of industrial leaders, including Microsoft, Qualcomm and Tencent. Some of them have launched operations in Guizhou, bringing in advanced technologies and capital.

In January last year, the provincial government of Guizhou signed a cooperative agreement with Qualcomm to establish a joint venture — Huaxintong, in Gui'an New Area — focusing on design, R&D and sales of server chips for the Chinese market.

During his first visit to Guizhou in August, Steve Mollenkopf, CEO of Qualcomm, said he was excited about and confident in doing business in Guizhou.

In another development,

Apple Inc agreed in July to invest \$1 billion in building its first China data center in Guizhou, to meet local consumers' growing demand for better cloud services.

It will be operated by Guizhou-Cloud Big Data Industry Co Ltd, a company owned by the Guizhou provincial government. The company will be the sole operating partner of Apple's iCloud service in the Chinese mainland.

Huawei, one of the world's largest telecom equipment makers, began construction of its data center project in Gui'an New Area in August, responding to the company's growing needs to build facilities that support its global services.

The first phase of the center will cover 400,000 square meters. It will operate about 600,000 servers, storing Huawei's global management data.

The events have played a crucial role in attracting employ-

ment, capital, technology and information to Guizhou, in the process creating economic benefits and boosting local industries' growth, according to local officials.

Last year, Guizhou hosted 248 expos, 607 forums and conferences, which attracted nearly 8 million visitors and brought in economic benefits worth 10 billion yuan, said Lu Yongzheng, deputy governor of Guizhou.

Zhang Hanlin, director of the Guizhou Bureau of Expo Affairs, said the provincial government will help to promote the integration of expos and local industries. It will also cultivate leading expo brands and make the events more professional and internationalized.

"We will try to bring in more competitive events in the long run," Zhang added.

Dong Xianwu contributed to the story



Visitors experience virtual reality technologies at the 2017 Big Data Industry Expo. YANG JUN / CHINA DAILY

## Formerly remote area gears up to drive into an exciting new future

Over the years, I've always pictured Guizhou province as a less developed and remote area in Southwest China, where tourism should be the supporting industry.

But when I first set foot in its capital Guiyang, during the 2017 China International Big Data Expo this May, I found out that the development of a new big data industry in recent years has brought about astonishing change in Guizhou.

There was a time the province was typically known for its lush green mountains, spicy sour cuisine, and as the home for ethnic minorities and poverty as well.

But what I found were extremely amazing high technologies grown and made locally — and that a slew of big data technologies have been widely applied, not only to the e-commerce business, but also to the booming e-governance sector and civil services, benefiting both local residents and governments.

During the big data expo, Alibaba Cloud, the cloud computing arm of internet giant Alibaba Group Holding, unveiled a new plan for a data center and a cloud platform project in cooperation with the Guiyang public security bureau, to provide more robust computing power and smarter artificial intelligence algorithms.

Guiyang public security bureau promised that in future — with the help of the clouding computing platform — vehicles with fake licenses will be automatically identified and pursued.

"For us, big data has become a powerful weapon against criminals," said Yu Yang, deputy chief of the bureau.

"With the use of big data analysis, burglary and robbery crimes dropped 5.99 percent in Guiyang last year, compared with 2015."

The achievement in e-governance is just part of the big changes Guizhou province has embraced in recent years.

I learnt more from interviews with local entrepreneurs.

It was hard not to be impressed by Truck Alliance, an Uber-type service for trucks based in Guiyang.

A \$156 million capital injection in May, following \$115 million of funding in December last year, crowned the startup as a unicorn. These are new, private companies worth at least \$1 billion.

With the latest \$56 million injection in August this year, the company has raised more than \$327 million in funding.

Using big data technology, the Truck Alliance's app helps match trucks nationwide with commodity owners in need of transport.

Luo Peng, president and co-founder of Truck Alliance, said that by using big data, it was able to help drivers to directly find commodities waiting to be shipped.

"With the support from the local governments, we are able to focus on developing the market," Luo said.

"Just as Alibaba offers infrastructure for e-commerce, we'll provide infrastructure for the logistics industry. In the future, truckers simply need to drive, as we'll take care of all other things for them," he added.

According to Luo, the Guizhou-based company had 4.5 million registered vehicles by the end of April. It also boasts 880,000 corporate members, with business covering 90 percent of the counties in China. The firm expects to cover over 95 percent of the counties by the end of this year.

When I'd returned from the big data expo to Beijing, I heard more news on big data development in Guizhou.

British newspaper The Guardian cited the prophetic words of Jack Ma, founder of Alibaba, in a report in July highlighting the rapid transformation of the province.

"If you have missed the opportunity in Guangdong or Zhejiang 30 years ago, by no means should you miss that of Guizhou today," Ma said.

## Rich splendor of Bouyei ethnic fashions celebrated in London show

By YUAN SHENGGAO

A very special fashion show was held in London on Sept 1, to mark the 45th anniversary of United Kingdom-China diplomatic relations.

The show, named *Weaving a Dream*, deeply impressed the audience because of the remarkable ethnic features it displayed, which are typical of Guizhou.

The show was co-hosted by Eve Group's China Workshop and B&H, a creative fashion platform aimed at improving the lives of Chinese women in remote regions by supporting the production of their handicraft.

It featured a fusion of Western fashion and Eastern motifs inspired by traditional Bouyei ethnic embroidery made by seamstresses from Guizhou province.

"We saw a wonderful show tonight and learnt how exquisite the Bouyei embroidery is," said Caroline Rush, president of the British Fashion Council.

"It was a successful show for seamstresses from the mountainous areas of Guizhou to showcase their embroi-



The Bouyei ethnic people living in southwestern Guizhou have been known for hundreds of years for their skills in embroidery. PROVIDED BY EVE CHINA

derly to the world," said Liu Xiaoming, China's ambassador to the UK.

Bouyei embroidery is an important part of Chinese intangible cultural heritage. Its appearance on the fashion stage of London was the fruit of joint efforts between Xia Hua, chairwoman of Chinese fashion company Eve Group and seamstresses in southwestern Guizhou.

Fifteen years ago, when Xia first

came to southwest Guizhou, she was fascinated by the variety of exquisite embroidery works made by local seamstresses.

After extensive investigations, she found that the motifs of the works were unique and had great potential to enter the international market.

With the help of Qianxinan's government, the Eve workshop was established in Ceheng county, to



A Bouyi woman displays her embroidery skills during the *Weaving a Dream* fashion show in London. PROVIDED BY EVE CHINA

explore a new way of protecting and developing local cultural heritage, and for poverty alleviation.

In southwest Guizhou, about 75 percent of the residents in Ceheng are Bouyei ethnic people. Bouyei embroidery has a long history there. However, many seamstresses cannot rely on embroidery to make a living. They have no choice but to leave to work in the bigger cities.

"I've been working in Guangdong province for 18 years," said Liang Xiaoyan, a seamstress in Ceheng.

"On hearing that an embroidery workshop was being built in my hometown, I came back as soon as I could."

Wei Shuzhang is an outstanding inheritor of the traditional embroidery skills in Wangmo county. She said one piece of her embroidery

work was bought by a Shanghai merchant for 11,600 yuan, which took her nine months to finish.

She is currently a master seamstress at an Eve workshop and was invited to the *Weaving a Dream* fashion show.

"With designs by the workshop, our works can sell at better prices," said Wei.

Eve Group's Xia Hua said she had big plans.

"We plan to set up 100 workshops in Guizhou within three to five years and make sure that there are enough orders for each workshop, so that the workers can have higher incomes than before," she said.

With the growing popularity of Bouyei embroidery, the Eve workshops will partner up with local governments and well-known companies internationally to develop tours exploring embroidery culture.

These are expected to help with poverty alleviation and the protection and inheritance process of Guizhou's intangible cultural heritage.

Dong Xianwu contributed to the story