

**COLM MCLOUGHLIN  
MANAGING DIRECTOR, DUBAI DUTY FREE**

Born in 1943, Irishman Colm McLoughlin began his retail career with Woolworths, a well-known chain of department stores, in London in the early 1960's. Returning to Ireland in 1969, he joined Shannon airport duty free and went on to become general manager.

In 1983 he was a member of the consultancy team from AerRianta International contracted to launch the new duty free operation. He remained in Dubai as General Manager of the new operation, later becoming Managing Director, and has been instrumental in helping to build one of the most successful duty free operations in the world which is currently ranked No. 3 in terms of turnover (based on 2004 figures of US\$500 million).

**Major Achievements:**

Colm McLoughlin, reports directly to H.H. Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed Al Maktoum, President of the Department of Civil Aviation (DCA) and is an Executive Board Member of DCA. In addition to heading up the duty free operation at Dubai International Airport, he is responsible for the management of the Aviation Club, a leading sports and social club in Dubai, and home of the award-winning Dubai Tennis Championships.

Under his management, Dubai Duty Free has witnessed dramatic growth.

- first year sales reached US\$20 million, while sales in 2004 reached US\$500 million, representing a 32% increase in sales over 2003 and a 2,000% increase since operations began. Sales for 2005 will be in excess of US\$560 million

- Dubai Duty Free currently employs over 1,500 staff. Of the original 100 staff, 64 still remain – these are referred to as ‘the pioneers’
- In the past twenty years, the average spend per departing passenger rose from US\$5 to US\$44
- The penetration level at Dubai Duty Free is 45% while the average penetration level is 15-20%
- In an unprecedented move, on its anniversary day on December 20<sup>th</sup>, 2003, Dubai Duty Free donated its daily sales to charity. The record sales of US\$1.9 million on the day went to local charities.
- Through its marketing drive, which includes major sports sponsorship and the world famous Finest Surprise and Millennium Millionaire promotions, both introduced by Colm McLoughlin, Dubai Duty Free has raised the profile of Dubai as a major sports, business and leisure centre

### **Achievements - Awards**

- Dubai Duty Free has won over 120 top international including: Nine Frontier Awards including the Frontier “Airport Retailer of the Year” award a record four times (2004, 2002, 2001, 1985), the Dubai Quality Award – Trade (1996) and Dubai Quality Award - Gold (in 2002). Dubai Duty Free is the only airport operation in the world to achieve both ISO 14001 and OHSAS 18001 (2003)
- Of the 120 top awards received, several have been presented to Dubai Duty Free’s Managing Director including:

### **Personal Achievements - Awards**

- In October 2004 at Cannes, Colm McLoughlin was presented with a Frontier ‘Lifetime Achievement’ award in recognition of his services to the duty free industry. Only the second ever recipient of the award, Colm joins the founder of the duty free industry, Dr. Brendan O’ Regan, in this honour.

- In 2004, the online industry magazine, Moodie Report, named Colm McLoughlin in their “**Man of the Year**” category, acknowledging the record sales achieved by Dubai Duty Free in what was a tough year for the industry
- In 2004, the GCC Tennis Committee presented Mr. McLoughlin with the award for ‘**Tennis Personality of the Year**’ recognizing his role and that of Dubai Duty Free in promoting tennis in the region
- In 2003, the Dubai Government presented Mr. McLoughlin with an award in recognition of “**Services to the Aviation Industry**” over the past twenty years
- In 2001, Mr. McLoughlin was inducted into the “**Decision Makers – Hall of Fame**” where he joined a select group of industry professionals who have made significant contributions towards the duty free business
- In 2000, Mr. McLoughlin was named the “**Millennium Galway Man of the Year**” at a ceremony in Ireland in recognition of his contribution towards the lives of Irish people living abroad
- In 1991, Mr. McLoughlin won the “**Pak-Emirates Forum Award for Excellence**”
- In 1986, Frontier Awards – the ‘Oscars of the industry’ named Mr. McLoughlin as “**Duty Free Person of the Year**”