

《Alibaba acts on vow about 1m US jobs》

Jack Ma, chairman of Alibaba Group Holding Ltd, is acting to fulfill a promise he made to US President Donald Trump: Get 1 million small and medium-sized US businesses enrolled on his online platforms to sell their products to China's growing middle class and create 1 million jobs in the United States.

Ma announced on Tuesday that Alibaba will host a two-day conference in Detroit in June to teach US businesses how to sell to the company's 443 million customers in China on the world's biggest e-commerce site.

"We are already a gateway for thousands of global brands, retailers and companies to sell to Chinese consumers. And we want to expand that gateway (and) level the playing field to make it easy for American entrepreneurs, small businesses and farmers alike to take advantage of the China opportunity," said Ma, also Alibaba's founder, in an open letter.

Called the Gateway 17, the conference will be held on June 20-21 and is expected to attract more than 1,000 US businesses, the company said in a statement. Ma will speak at the event.

Ma met Trump in New York in January, shortly after he was elected, to discuss how Alibaba could help create jobs in the US. Ma promised he would help create 1 million jobs over five years by enabling small businesses to sell goods on Alibaba's e-commerce platforms primarily on its Taobao and Tmall websites.

Jennifer Kuperman, head of international corporate communications at Alibaba, said that the 1 million figure is nothing but "conservative".

"If you think about the number of businesses on our platform, if they even hire one person to help with the demand from Chinese consumers, that gets you to a million jobs; so that's very simple. And that we think it's basically conservative, because we believe that we're going to make it larger than that in the next five years," said Kuperman.

Brion Tingler, head of external affairs for Alibaba, said that Detroit is an ideal location for the event.

"Detroit has a long history of selling to China. Detroit is also considered home to some of America's greatest ingenuity and innovation and its location is convenient to attract small business people and farmers from the heartland," he said.

Michigan Governor Rick Snyder said that China is an "important and viable market for a wide range of products and services. This event will open doors for Michigan businesses, farmers and entrepreneurs by helping them identify and enter into new relationships there".

Brian Gao, president of the Detroit Chinese Business Association, said his group is excited that Detroit will be the

host city.

"The DCBA views Jack Ma as one of the most important entrepreneurs in the 21st century, and to host his only scheduled public speaking engagement for 2017 in Detroit is a seminal moment for our organization and the state of Michigan," Gao said.

