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FUNCTION OF EMECA

EMECA, the European Major Exhibition Centres Association, has been formed in 1992 to focus attention on the impact which the exhibition industry achieves throughout Europe.

EMECA is also an organisation which refines and represents the views and experience of major European centres whose exhibition hall capacity exceeds 100,000 square metres and whose activity is internationally orientated.

EMECA strives to improve the quality and availability of technical and commercial information on fairs and exhibitions in Europe and also promotes the exchange of ideas and experience in managing exhibition centres and researches the scope for harmonising technical regulations on a consistent European basis.

Authoritative views on the exhibition industry will therefore be presented to the European Commission and intergovernmental organisations interested in international trade and commerce development.

For a full membership list see the back page.

Pole position for Fiera Milano

Milan, already Italy's biggest exhibition centre by far, is looking to create the largest exhibition system in the world with construction of a new out-of-town site. With this ambitious plan in mind, three years ago the exhibition company began by giving itself a new structure. Fondazione Fiera Milano, subject to private law as a foundation, today heads a group of eight companies, foremost among them Fiera Milano SpA. This manages the exhibition areas and premises and offers the various show-related services. The foundation's task is to relaunch the group and reposition it with the so-called "external pole" in Rho-Pero.

Two-thirds of the necessary investment will come from internally generated funds, the company says. In addition to the sale of a large part of the municipal site, the stock exchange listing at the turn of last year should help to finance the project. 49 % of the shares in the foundation are exchange-traded.

At present Fiera Milano possesses 26 downtown halls featuring a gross area of altogether approximately 348,000 m². The exhibition company is proud of its three newest halls with total useful area of 45,000 m², inaugurated at the end of 1997 on the Portello exhibition site. In technical and logistical terms they can boast innovative, future-proof service facilities. But Fiera Milano aims to expand yet further. With space in the heart of town having reached its limits, there was only one solution: a greenfield site.

So in August 2000 the Lombardy region, Milan province, the Milan municipal authorities, the suburbs Rho and Pero and Fiera Milano, with the support of Agip Petroli, signed an agreement to create a new exhibition centre. This will add a new, external pole to the downtown exhibition areas, to be built on the site of Agip's former oil refinery in Rho-Pero. The location is just nine kilometres from Milan city centre on the feeder road to Malpensa international airport. This new pole represents a project in the

order of € 500 to 750 million.

To realise this objective, the general council of Milan's exhibition foundation has set up the company Sviluppo Sistema Fiera to oversee construction of the new exhibition centre. "This way Fondazione Fiera Milano intends further strengthening its leading international position, which rests on more than 1.5 million m² rented exhibition space," President Luigi Roth says.

The newbuild exhibition centre will comprise eight halls – four ground-level, two ground-level with high ceilings and two two-storey – with net exhibition space of 345,000 m², equivalent to a useful area of 200,000 m². The exhibition halls all have separate goods and visitor entrances, enabling different shows to be organised at the same time without disturbing one another.

There are also plans for 80 conference rooms and about 20,000 parking lots for visitors and exhibitors. The grounds are surrounded by 180,000 m² of green areas.

The external pole is also easy to reach. A shuttle bus runs from Linate and Malpensa airports. Funding has already been found for further connecting roads, which are on the drawing board. The municipal authorities have promised an underground railway connection. For this, the present Line 1 terminus in Molino is to be extended by 1.5 kilometres. Moreover, a high-speed railway line is planned to a station north of Milan.

All in all the outer pole will be larger, more efficient and customer-friendlier, taking some of the pressure off the present downtown exhibition pole, where the display area is to be reduced to one-third, roughly 60,000 m² net, equivalent to roughly 120,000 m² gross. The areas no longer needed will be sold off.

Strategic planning will keep shows more closely connected to the city, such as fashion fairs, in their municipal setting with all the others taking place in the new halls. Four of the new halls are scheduled to go on tap by December 2004, the other four in April 2005. ■

VeronaFiere in 2002 and beyond

"For VeronaFiere, 2002 was a particularly positive year," Luigi Castelletti, the exhibition organiser's new president, stated at the EMECA AGM this May in Lisbon. "All the main sector indicators (number of exhibitors, number of visitors and net occupied area) highlighted excellent growth trends. Trends in overall turnover were also positive, totalling more than € 53.5 million with an increase of 6 % compared to the budgeted financial statement and 16 % on 1999, the reference year in terms of the type of events. The figures for the first four months of 2003 fully confirm this positive trend."

According to Castelletti, VeronaFiere's development will be based on further lines of strategic action over the next few years: first and foremost by upgrading exhibition areas and services with increasingly competitive structures. In this regard, major investments have been programmed (totalling € 21 million – entirely self-financed – during 2002, with projects totalling € 50 million over the next three years).

Finally, the procedures for privatisation of VeronaFiera (transforming it from a public-sector enterprise to a stock corporation) have already been set in train, and VeronaFiere expects them to be concluded in the second half of this year. "This will take place alongside the implementation of a long-term development business plan proposed by the board of directors and approved by the AGM," president Castelletti said. "Its guidelines include further expansion of areas serving the exhibition centre, with particular emphasis on the fruit and vegetable market; a wider international presence for VeronaFiere, not the least through exhibition centre management initiatives, with reference first and foremost to the project already underway in Warsaw; the creation of a system of equity holdings in exhibition service management and event management companies, the latter both in Italy and abroad; a policy of investments for the development of events already in the portfolio and the acquisition of new events." ■

Rimini Fiera on target for 2002

At the end of May, Rimini Fiera SpA's board of directors unanimously approved the 2002 financial statements. "It is the record of a turning point," said Rimini Fiera SpA President Lorenzo Cagnoni, "as far as both production volume and profitability are concerned. Rimini Fiera SpA managed comfortably to achieve its objectives, confirming its role as direct manager of the exhibitions that make up 90 % of its business."

Production value in 2002 was € 46.1 million (a rise of 55.5 % on 2001), consolidated turnover reached € 52 million (up 52.4 % on 2001) and the gross consolidated operating margin was € 19 million (a 78 % increase on 2001). Investment exceeded € 29 million, and gross exhibit space sold moved up 30.9 %.

"Last year we also strengthened our strategic alliances with other expo venues and organizers and expanded our business diversification plans, both in terms of geographical coverage and market sec-

tors," Cagnoni added. "We are reaching an agreement with Fiera di Bologna and entrepreneur Alfredo Cazzola's Promotor International for management of the My Special Car exhibition, to be held 2004 in Rimini."

Rimini Fiera General Manager Piero Venturelli announced two upcoming goals for the Expo Centre premises: "Work is proceeding according to schedule and by the end of the year construction of the Centre's on-site railway station on the Milan-Bari line will be finished, at a cost of approximately € 5 million. Moreover, extension work has begun on the west side of the complex. The construction of two new halls will increase gross exhibit area from 84,000 to 111,000 m²." ■

Paris-Nord Villepinte takes over Le Bourget

GIFAS, the French Aerospace Industries Association, owner of the Paris-Le Bourget Exhibition Centre and organiser of the Paris Air Show, signed a long-term agreement with the Paris-Nord Villepinte Convention and Exhibition Centre on May 15, 2003. Under the terms of this contract Paris-Nord Villepinte (191,000 m²) will take over the running of activities at Paris-Le Bourget (78,000 m²) for the next 20 years. Marc Granier, current general manager of Paris-Nord Villepinte, will assume overall management of the two venues. With this agreement, Paris-Nord Villepinte aims to enhance its product mix and boost the professional and public exhibition and congress industry in the Ile de France region. Over the past 20 years, Paris-Nord Villepinte has managed to acquire an international reputation by hosting international exhibitions such as maison&objet, SIAL, Première Vision-Le Salon, Emballage, Machines Outils, Corrugated, CPHI, and Equip Auto, among others. This agreement reinforces the complementary strengths of these two centres, which are located within ten minutes of each other by shuttle bus.

Some of the major events at Paris-Le Bourget include the Paris Air Show (world leader), Euronaval, Stockorama-Distrirama, Milipol, Euronaval. Over the next few months, priority will be given to full refurbishment of the venue. An architectural firm, landscape architects, developers and contractors will be commissioned for this task, which will cover 45 hectares and an exhibition area spanning 80,000 m². ■

Up to 400 exhibitors at premiere of Automatica

Ambitious targets have been set for the premiere of the new international trade fair for robotics and automation, Automatica, by Messe München GmbH as the organisers and VDMA (German engineering industry association) Robotics + Automation as the technical sponsors. The show is poised to launch from June 15 to 18, 2004 in Munich with up to 400 exhibitors, 15 % of them from abroad, on an area of 30,000 m². 40,000 visitors are expected, around 30 % of them from abroad. Automatica is scheduled

to take place every two years as a spin-off from Factory Automation, which previously belonged to the Hanover Fair as a tradeshow. VDMA president Stefan Müller on the location decision: "At their presentation both exhibition companies gave undertakings, some of which subsequently emerged as impossible to fulfil. I'm not saying they didn't want to fulfil them." Munich ultimately won out as event host because it satisfied the catalogue of requirements decidedly better than Hanover. Aspects scrutinised in addition to classical criteria included the financial sponsor's management and competence, the relationship of trust, promotion budgets and the ability to build up brand profiles internationally. ■

Meeting made easy

Paris Expo, The Paris Meeting Points, recently launched its new website allowing users to view the entire seven Parisian conference and exhibition centres. The site at www.paris-expo.fr offers a range of options determined by the meeting planner's size requirements and other needs and, after the selection search, automatically generates the adequate space available for an event. It is possible to visualise and download plans and logos and to view the multi-venue event calendar. "As the conference and exhibition industry has evolved, so we have adapted our resources to keep up to date in terms of satisfying and exceeding clients' requirements," Anne Marie Narboni, spokesperson for Paris Expo, said. "The new interactive website will provide a simple and versatile tool to serve organisers' needs." ■

New potential for Brussels

Brussels Expo, Parc des Expositions de Bruxelles, is planning a new conference centre. According to the company, the project will help further develop Brussels as a political, economic and cultural axis of Europe. The new centre with capacity for 6,000 people is to be built in the Heizel region, opposite Palace 5 at Brussels Expo. The proximity of a conference centre is expected to reposition the exhibition park and the city as a whole. ■

United beauty in Frankfurt

"International Frankfurt Beauty Week", scheduled for March 5 to 8, 2004, will mark the launch of a new joint trade fair cluster in Frankfurt: for beauty, wellness, personality and beauty care. Four international trade fairs – Beautyworld, Passione, Lifetime and Cosmetica, the last a newcomer to the joint group – will be presenting a wide range of products.

Cosmetica joined the trade-fair group in April 2003. With its full programme, covering everything to do with professional cosmetic treatments and products for beauty, personal care and health, this trade fair for cosmetic institutes, beauty salons and beauty farms will provide a fitting complement to the trade fairs already in the group. With its wide spectrum, it has a direct thematic connection with "Beautyworld", the trade fair for perfumery, cosmetics, drug stores and hair-dressers, with "Passione", the trade fair for personal products and accessories, and with "Lifetime", the trade fair for spas and wellness.

The organiser of Cosmetica is Messe Frankfurt GmbH, in conjunction with Kosmetik International Messe GmbH in Gaggenau. Until now the fair has been held in Berlin, Leipzig and Hanover. The aim is to expand Cosmetica within the "International Frankfurt Beauty Week" constellation and to enhance its importance, especially on an international level. ■

In brief

For the first time the Spanish photography tradeshow, **Sonimagfoto 2003**, which is being held from October 1 to 5 in Barcelona's Montjuic exhibition centre, is also incorporating mobile telephony. The new-generation multimedia messaging service (MMS) terminals with text, sound and images will open up other business opportunities for photography. The exhibition, organised by **Fira de Barcelona**, can already confirm the presence of mobile operators and manufacturers, such as Movistar and Sony-Ericsson.

The trade fair trio **FachPack** (packaging and labelling technology), **PrintPack** (package printing and label production) and **LogIntern** (inplant logistics) start together at **Nuremberg** exhibition centre for the first time from October 8 to 10,

The latest recruitment drive at The NEC, Birmingham takes the team of exhibition sales account managers to six: **Charlotte Bristow, Adela Liew, Karen Hawley, James Anderson, Simon Clifton and Debbie Evans** join the newly merged exhibition sales and planning department. It aims to work closely with exhibition organisers to ensure first class service delivery. Centrex, the exhibition organising arm of The NEC Group, has also announced plans to restructure its team: **Jamie Graham** will become Centrex interim general manager in addition to his role as business director on the exhibition sales and planning team, and **Andy Bird** will become operations director for all Centrex shows. **Fran Foster** will continue her work on the division's antiques show portfolio. The changes follow **Andy Gibb's** recent decision to leave The NEC Group.

2003. How well they harmonise was already demonstrated by FachPack and PrintPack in 2001, when they brought together nearly 1,000 exhibitors and more than 25,000 trade visitors.

Broadcast 2003, the International Audiovisual Technology Trade Show, will take place between October 7 and 10, 2003 in Hall 9 at the Juan Carlos I Exhibition Centre, **Feria de Madrid**, featuring gross exhibition area of 21,600 m². This figure represents an increase of 25 % on the previous edition staged in Hall 7. The trade fair takes place every two years and is aimed exclusively at industry professionals.

EBACE 2003, the only European exhibition of its kind to focus entirely on business aviation, was held from May 7 through 9 at **Geneva Palexpo**, Switzerland. It registered 5,984 attendees – an increase of more than 24 % relative to last year's total of 4,824 – and featured 248 exhibitors occupying 615 booths measuring 3 by 3 m², an increase of 13.2 %. EBACE 2003 also featured 25 static display exhibitors – compared with 18 in 2002, a 39 % increase – and 34 aircraft on static display at Geneva International Airport, including six aircraft present at EBACE for the first time.

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Preparations for the next **International Furniture Fair of Valencia (FIM)**, scheduled for September 29 to October 4, are in full swing. At the moment, the fair can already boast an excellent level of loyalty from existing exhibitors, with 95.41 % confirming attendance again this year. This figure – given that FIM 2002 attracted a total of 1,251 exhibitors displaying their products on space of more than 95,000 m² – means that FIM 2003 has already confirmed around 1,200 exhibitors.

Igeho 03, which takes place in the halls of **Basel Exhibition** from November 21 to 25, 2003, will this year once again confirm its strong position in the international market of hotel and restaurant trade fairs. At the end of April – around 7 months before the beginning of the show – the exhibition management was able to announce a pleasing number of registrations: Over 500 exhibitors and co-exhibitors had already registered, thus occupying around 80 % of the total exhibition area at Igeho 01. Leading suppliers from the areas of food & beverages, kitchen technology and linen, building technology, installations, restaurant and hotel supplies, service, organization & information technology and services will present their highlights and innovations.

The **Salon Automobile de Lyon** takes place for the tenth time from October 4 to 12, 2003, marking its 20th anniversary. As the only motor manufacturers' show in France taking place in odd years, the Salon Automobile de Lyon will give the public a foretaste of all the novelties of the year 2004. 280,000 visitors passed through the gates of the **Parc des Expositions de Lyon** in 2001 to encounter the fascination of the motorised world.

The **NEC, Birmingham** is gearing up to welcome a record-breaking **ITMA 2003** from October 22 to 29. Figures released in May show that visitor pre-registration bookings to the international textile exhibition were already up by over 200 % on the 1999 show, held in Paris. And with a few months still to go, figures are expected to climb even more rapidly, with visitors from the UK, Germany, India, USA and Pakistan leading the way to date. Exhibitor figures are breaking records, too. With over 1,350 confirmed exhibitors to date, space is sold out in most sectors. ■

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