



DIALOG

DIALOGUE · DIALOGO

NEWSLETTER OF THE EUROPEAN MAJOR
EXHIBITION CENTRES ASSOCIATION

DECEMBER 2004
ISSUE 6

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.

Plenty new on the western front

Things are happening in the exhibition industry throughout Europe. EMECA members are reporting innovations, with Lyon inaugurating its new Hall 66, MCH Swiss Exhibition Ltd. in positive territory and Milan competing very seriously with Hanover as a big-ticket exhibition centre.

Business is also going well in the south-westernmost tip of Europe. Lisbon fair has announced a 25 % increase in exhibitors for 2003, with attendance up 3 % and sales 4.5 % higher. In view of the flat economic situation, Lisbon expects only modest growth of up to 3 % for the current business year. In Spain the exhibition centres in Valencia, Madrid and Barcelona are vying for trade. In the period 2001 to 2004 the number of exhibitions in Valencia jumped 9 % and net space sold edged up by not quite 3 %. In Barcelona, more exhibitors have taken part in shows in 2004, the space sold has held steady, and more visitors have attended the exhibitions.

IFEMA in Madrid celebrated its 25th anniversary this year. With 43 exhibitions in the first six months, it boosted sales by 12 % on the first half of 2003. The two most heavily frequented fairs were understandably hit in the aftermath of the March 11 terrorist attacks, posting lower overall attendance than in the comparable period 2002. Nonetheless, the exhibition company closes the business year with 15 % growth in sales on 2002. Madrid is one of the most rapidly expanding exhibition centres in Europe, with a second extension stage planned.

The exhibition year 2003 took 1,028,000 visitors and 21,000 exhibitors to Paris-Nord Villepinte. Both figures represent a slight downtick on the previous years. In 2003 the exhibition and conference centre Eurexpo in Lyon posted the best-ever turnover of its 20-year history. The new 12,800 m² Hall 66 was inaugurated in October 2004, bringing Lyon up to the magic 100,000 m² mark. The fastest

growth at present is taking place in business with events. Although the current financial year is rotationally weaker, profits are on course for further positive development.

Exhibition activity in Italy is progressing dynamically and professionally with further advances in privatisation. Rimini Fiera achieved a capital increase to 19.7 % in the spring, and privatisation is now entering the second round. Two new halls (13,000 m²) were taken online in September. In 2003 sales came in at € 51.2 million, with 590,000 m² sold at the 23 exhibitions (2002: 700,641 m²); 7,713 exhibitors were counted (2002: 9,163), and attendance rose from 896,655 in 2002 to 927,868. The ten-year plan projects sales growth to € 95 million.

Bologna reports an uptick in net space sold. Sales and marketing manager Mauro Malfatti from BolognaFiere says the key ratios are all positive on average and business is going well. The Fiera Milano group of companies boosted its sales mid-2004 from € 219 million to € 291 million. EBIDTA climbed from € 36 to 57 million. The new 400,000 m² exhibition centre opens at the beginning of April 2005.

In Switzerland, the exhibition companies experienced no growth of note in 2004. The business year at Geneva's Palexpo was slightly slacker than in 2003 due to the periodicity of certain fairs. In the course of the year it has seen a change of management. MCH Swiss Exhibition with venues in Basel and Zurich reports consolidated earnings through June 2004 of CHF 126.0 million (2003: CHF 121.0 million). The figures for 2003 showed earnings of CHF 179.5 million (2002: CHF 181.2 million) and expenditure before depreciation of CHF 149.2 million (2002: CHF 151.0 million), with a cash flow of CHF 30.3 million (2002: CHF 30.2 million).

The NEC National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham, was given a huge boost by

the first-time staging of the textile machinery exhibition ITMA, which occupied the entire 200,000 m² site.

Satisfactory year results are reported by the German EMECA centres Frankfurt and Nuremberg. Benefiting from eastward enlargement of the European Union, Nuremberg is investing in the new CongressCenter East. In its international business, Frankfurt is looking westward, launching cooperation with Paris. ■

Two new halls and more parking space planned

IFEMA has promoted a second extension project for its facilities in the Juan Carlos I Exhibition Centre in Madrid, which will mean, from 2007, the incorporation of two new halls with a gross surface area of 50,000 m². Together with the 150,000 m² that are already available, IFEMA will reach a total of 200,000 m². The Convention Centre itself has 13,000 m² between the South and the North Gates. The new Halls 12 and 14 will have a complete set of rooms and be able to accommodate all types of events. These spaces have been designed with the exhibition centre's contribution to Madrid's bid to

host the Olympic Games in 2012 in mind. Specifically, Hall 12 with 14,000 m² and a height of 17.5 m will be completely open plan and therefore particularly suitable for hosting other types of activities in addition to trade fairs, including sports competitions. Hall 14, which will have two floors of 14,400 m² each and a free-standing height of 11 m on the ground floor and 9 on the upper floor, will benefit from the second floor's greater load resistance – up to 1,500 kg/m³ – which will allow the same trade fair activities to be carried out as in the rest of the exhibition units. Furthermore, Hall 14 will offer a basement area measuring 5,500 m², featuring direct access to the exterior, thus facilitating the loading and unloading of merchandise, whilst also providing access to the hall's second floor by means of 4 elevators.

The project also envisages 5 catering units; 16 meeting rooms offering capacities of between 25 m² and 1,000 m²; two corridors connecting Halls 4 and 6, equipped with automatic walkways and escalators, and a series of canopies that will link Halls 12 and 14 with the South Gate, also equipped with escalator walkways.

This entire development, which has a budget of € 115 million, will be rounded off by the creation of car parks in the south-eastern section of the exhibition centre. There will be 2,430 parking spaces on two floors, covering 58,000 m². ■

General assembly in Lyon

At the beginning of November Yves Hunckler, General Manager Eurexpo Lyon, played the perfect host to delegates at the general assembly chaired by Michael von Zitzewitz, CEO Messe Frankfurt.

The agenda included the subject of fire protection at European exhibition centres, the EMECA EU Working Group and presentation by Piergiacomo Ferrari of the new Fiera Milano construction project. Scheduled for inauguration in April 2005, it will be one of the biggest in Europe. The roundtable of leading European exhibition centres made it clear that 2005 is expected to bring further growth for the European exhibition market. There was also consensus at the general assembly that Europe should defend, and ideally further develop, its position as the premier exhibition continent versus North America and Asia. Apart from the size and internationality of the respective shows, it was agreed that the subject of quality leadership in infrastructure, organisation and marketing was of pivotal importance.

The culinary highlight of the general assembly was the dinner with Paul Bocuse, who concocted an inimitable menu. ■



Graphic arts shows in Rho-Però combined

A study by Cermes-Bocconi on the positioning of its graphic arts and converting exhibitions revealed that the existence of two equal-ranking shows, Grafitalia/Converflex and GEC, was causing confusion. It has therefore been decided to focus exclusively on Grafitalia/Converflex, which are better known and more popular, and to give up GEC, the traditional exhibition whose first edition dates back to 1959.

As a result, Grafitalia/Converflex are being moved from October 2005 to May 9 to 13, 2006 (and then again in May 2009). This decision allows organisers Centrexpo SpA to take advantage of the better established structures and services on Milan's new exhibition site in Rho-Però and the improved transport links to the city. ■

Check in on the exhibition grounds

During major exhibitions, visitors and exhibitors can begin embarking procedures by checking in for their flight on the exhibition grounds. This is one of the initiatives foreseen in the agreement between Veronafiere and Sistema del Garda Airports with a view to a mutual enhancement of facilities and spaces and better management of incoming visitor flows for the exhibition grounds and the Arena. Fondazione Arena, the third strong partner to the agreement, is another of Verona's major magnets. This agreement is another step forward in building up a marketing system for global promotion of the economic, social and cultural aspects in the Verona region. ■

New technology for Paris Expo

Paris Expo, Porte de Versailles, the fourth-largest complex in Europe, has once again invested in new technologies and telecommunications, this time to service the six million visitors and business clients yearly with a high speed Internet wireless link that can be used with convenient pre-paid cards. The main objective is to provide huge mobility to clients with an efficient, secure, cost effective Wi-Fi connection at the highest speed available in the eight halls, 32

PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

Detlef Braun (44) is Messe Frankfurt's new managing director. He succeeds Gerhard Gladitsch, who stepped down from the exhibition company's management months ago. Before moving to Frankfurt, Braun held an executive position in the Philip Morris group and worked for fashion producer Joop and for J. Walter Thompson, among others. The exhibition Heimtextil will also come within his remit.

Claude Membrez (39) took over as Director General of Geneva Palexpo on November 1. A graduate of the hotel management college in Lausanne and holder of a certificate in company management, Membrez has held managerial and executive positions in the hotel industry in Switzerland, France and Canada. His first mission will now consist of managing and developing the activities of Geneva Palexpo, while overseeing the retention of knowhow and the harmonious running of existing events.

Paul Vincent (40) has been appointed the new marketing

director of The NEC Group, Birmingham. In addition to his new role, he will continue to be responsible for the group's internet and media operations. Vincent, who has been with the group since 1996, originally joined the company to head up marketing for Centre Exhibitions, The NEC Group exhibition organising division, before being made director of group media & internet in 1998.

Roger Dickens is to be the new chairman of The NEC Group. He will be taking over from Roger Burman, who retires from the board in January 2005 after 20 years. A prominent business leader, Dickens plays a very active role in the West Midlands business community. He was formerly president of the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce and Industry and chairman and founder of Birmingham Forward. In addition, he is a former chairman of the West Midlands Regional Industrial Development Board and the West Midlands Regional Group of Chambers.

meeting rooms and three auditoriums comprising 220,000 m² in all. Anne Marie Narboni, Head International Development: "The launch of Wi-Fi at Paris Expo, Porte de Versailles, reveals our strong involvement in the meetings and exhibition industry to develop an ongoing state of the art image for our platform. The optimal service guarantees onsite security systems, anti-virus backups and high-speed international connections." Paris Expo owns and manages seven international congress and exhibition venues in Paris. More than 950 events are hosted there each year. ■

obtain an overview of components for global sourcing from Italian companies in the hall next door," says Tanja Schoniger, project manager at NürnbergMesse.

Around 150 exhibitors from the segments foundries, metal machining and forming, plastic processing and rubber processing presented their products at the last subcontracting from Italy 2004 in Cologne. The event is organised annually by the Italian Institute for Foreign Trade (ICE), Düsseldorf, in co-operation with the Bundesverband für Materialwirtschaft, Einkauf und Logistik e. V. (BME), Frankfurt. ■

Two in one

The way to Nürnberg for e_procure & supply next year will be twice as worthwhile for trade visitors specialising in purchasing, because the Subcontracting from Italy trade fair takes place for the first time at Nuremberg Exhibition Centre concurrently with e_procure & supply on May 10 and 11, 2005. "This is a great synergy effect for our visitors. Buyers can source information on procurement and supplier management solutions in one hall and

In brief

Among the few Italian buildings included in the **Phaidon Atlas of Contemporary World Architecture** that documents the world's most outstanding works of architecture built from 1998 to the present day is the new **Rimini Fiera** expo centre, realised in 2001 by Hamburg's Marg & Partner studio. The venue is described in detail with a technical data sheet, outdoor photos and indoor shots, as well as a complete map of the expo centre.

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Interplas 05 and the **Penton Media Manufacturing Exhibitions** will exhibit alongside each other next year in a move designed to inspire and attract increased numbers of quality purchasers and engineers to all events. The five Penton shows – Design Engineering Show, Computers in Manufacturing (CIM), Time Compression Technologies, Inspex and Tooling and Interplas 05 – the UK's premier and triennial plastics exhibition – will take place alongside each other at The NEC, **Birmingham** from October 4 to 6, 2005.

Beginning in 2005, the new **Vision Show** – Exhibition for Machine Vision Technologies and Solutions will be staged annually, alternately in **Paris-Nord/Villepinte** and **Lyon**, as part of Industrie. The organisers are Expositum, the first date is March 8 to 11.

The **ICC** has been named among the cleanest buildings in the UK. The venue claimed the national award for public buildings in the **2004 Building Cleanability Awards**, which examine building design, construction and management while recognising the cost benefits associated with cleaning-friendly buildings. Stephen Wright, Awards Chairman, said: „These Awards are designed to focus attention on the important relationship between building design, material usage and cleaning effectiveness.”

A constantly increasing number of visitors get **online accreditation** at **Rimini Fiera**, on average almost 10 % of the total number of visitors. Rimini Fiera SpA technical manager Nazario Pedini explains the two year-old service: „On-line registration offers numerous advantages. Visitors coming to expos for which an admission fee is charged have the convenience of a reduced rate ticket, whereas those attending trade-only events are ensured fast-lane access. In fact, on-line accreditation makes it possible to avoid time-wasting queues at the entrances.”

Sirha, International Hotel, Catering and Food Trade Exhibition, takes place from January 22 to 26, 2005 on the Eurexpo site in **Lyon**. Organisers SepelCom are expecting more than 1,600 international exhibitors and 164,000 visitors to the international gathering. For the first time since enlargement of the European Union, all 25 member states will be present. ■

E.M.E.C.A. Dialog/Dialogue/Dialogo is the newsletter of the European Major Exhibition Centres Association. Administration: Cornelia Gros, E.M.E.C.A. Secretary
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© and published by: m+a Publishers for Fairs,
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