



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.

Strength in numbers



Engaged to be married: Paris Expo – Porte de Versailles

The coming months look set to bring the emergence of a French giant capable of changing the European exhibition organisation landscape. The Paris chamber of industry and commerce (CCIP) and the property group Unibail listed on the Paris stock exchange aim to complete by May negotiations on “rapprochement of their exhibition activities” – Paris Expo and Expositum (Unibail) on the one hand and Comexpo, Paris Le Bourget and Paris-Nord Villepinte (CCIP) on the other. So very soon France’s biggest exhibition and convention sites, La Porte de Versailles (Paris Expo, 228,000 m²) and Paris-Nord Villepinte (Comexpo, a branch of the CCIP, 205,000 m²) could belong to just one group that would then hold available in excess of 570,000 m² of exhibition space. Sales by the new construct – with € 560 million targeted – would overtake those at Messe Frankfurt (€ 400 million). In terms of its exhibition structure Paris has so far been an exception in Europe, says Jean-Yves Durance, CCIP vice president, who is conducting the

negotiations with Unibail. “All cities in Europe have just one exhibition centre. But Paris possesses two sites, each of which alone has so far been unable to achieve the critical mass of around 300,000 m² necessary for international fairs.” Besides which, he says, Porte de Versailles – home to such established shows as the international agricultural exhibition Salon International de l’Agriculture – suffers from infrastructural problems. With no room for expansion, the site is reaching the limits of its growth. “The exhibition space in the heart of downtown Paris is completely ‘encircled’ by its urban environment,” Durance laments. “The CCIP has therefore decided to expand Paris-Nord Villepinte,” he continues. The plan is to develop Villepinte and bring its exhibition space up to 350,000 m². “Estimates put the total cost of the project at between € 150 and € 300 million. For this we need a partner from private industry that we can trust. As a public institution we couldn’t have taken on the financial risk alone,” the VP adds.

Unibail and the CCIP are reported to have opened talks in September 2006. The outcome of their negotiations, to be announced in June, will probably not be a genuine merger: cooperation is expected to consist of an amalgamation of the property assets and the exhibition management activities, creating a holding company in which each partner owns a 50 % stake. The marriage must then be blessed by the office of fair trading. Given the competition watchdog's extension of the review deadline, it is therefore unlikely that the union will be solemnised before September.

In the space of just two years the exhibition landscape in Paris – the French capital is the world number one with 229 international conventions and exhibitions – has become highly concentrated. Historically speaking, until then Paris consisted of a clutch of small exhibition companies. Then in 2005 the company Unibail, which already owned Paris Expo – Porte de Versailles, Cnit, Carrousel du Louvre, and Espace Champerret – acquired Expositum. Meanwhile, the Paris chamber of commerce has strengthened the capital ties between Paris-Nord Villepinte and Comexpo, the former Comit des Expositions de Paris, a collection of local exhibition organisers and institutions. Now Unibail and CCIP are planning to move closer and, with united forces, leave the borders of France behind them. They are looking to play a bigger role on the world stage and planning “to develop a much more aggressive, international strategy”, Durance says. Specific announcements, however, are not to be expected before 2008. ■

Business Plan approved

Fiera Milano's Board of Directors approved the group's 2007–2011 Business Plan on March 12. This repositions Fiera Milano, accentuating its mission as a provider of specialised services relating to exhibitions and congresses and generating value for customers. It also includes activities designed to enhance the value of, and internationalise, the exhibition portfolio. The plan features action on exhibition seasonality, increasing and stabilising revenues and margins, which today are subject to sometimes major year-to-year fluctuations. To support these actions € 120 million will be invested in the 2-year period 2007–2008, about 80 % of it during the current year. A return of 12 % is forecast on a normalised basis, i.e. in 2009. Revenue and margin improvement are also expected from more direct organisation of events – with the aim of optimising exploitation of the exhibition site when it is not occupied by exhibitions. ■

Investments for requalification

VeronaFiere has approved the requalification project prepared by the German company GMP, and work began already in 2006 to transform Verona Exhibition Centre's urban character with the aim of converting it into one of the most modern show areas in Europe through the creation of an “Exhibition City”. GMP, a company specialising in exhibition centre design, plans to increase the indoor area to 160,000 m² from the current 120,000 m² and upgrade the show area's image and rationalise its facilities with a series of structural projects. Two new halls totalling 20,000 m² were completed in 2006, and early in 2007 another measuring more than 13,000 m² will be ready.

Since 2004, investments of more than € 80 million have been made in upgrading the exhibition centre and its services. Further investments of € 68 million are scheduled up to 2011. ■

Promotion of health and wellbeing

The president of the CVIDA Association, Joaquin Forriol, and the president of **Feria Valencia**, Alberto Catal, signed an agreement on March 9 for the future promotion of technologies for health and wellbeing. This collaboration seeks to encourage specific agreements dealing with aspects such as staging events and fairs related to technologies for health and wellbeing and the promotion of enterprises and organisations associated with this sector.

For Feria Valencia, the agreement represents a competitive advantage in that, besides hosting a new monographic fair, it will be able to differentiate and add value to other fairs and exhibitors whose activity is related directly or indirectly to the goals and actions of the CVIDA Association. ■

New marketing campaign

Paris Expo is a proactive partner for its exhibition organisers. Its primary objectives are to raise awareness among visitors for the events organised in its seven venues and to position its exhibitions as “leisure outings”. To achieve this, a powerful advertising campaign featuring Paris itself as the backdrop for colourful advertising hoardings and press announcements was launched last December and its visibility further sharpened this March. A redesigned printed calendar of events with increased circulation (200,000 copies) was issued in January – with three editions a year planned. Moreover, an interactive website for the public went on line: www.paris-expo.fr gives instant access to an overview of all the events, updated in real time. ■

Improvements under way

The **Paris Expo** – Porte de Versailles concourse has been completely transformed and redesigned. Circulation and flow have been rethought, and nature and greenery installed. The second phase of the project, intended primarily to create a main passage for pedestrians only, is scheduled for completion in September. Planning permission for reconstruction and renovation of the 35 year-old Hall 7 should be granted in the fourth quarter of this year so that work can begin in 2008. The outside access is already covered, with construction of a moving walkway/escalator for visitor transit. ■

Second best results ever

In 2006 the **Swiss Exhibition Group** achieved the second best results in its history. With income of CHF 218.1 million (€ 134.7m), group profit amounts to CHF 13.8 million (€ 8.5m; 2005: CHF 14.6m/€ 9.0m). In spite of a rotationally much weaker

proprietary exhibition program in 2006 compared to 2005, the results come in only slightly below the previous year. The Swiss Exhibition Group thus posts income of CHF 3.8 million (€ 2.3m) less in 2006 and cash flow of CHF 48.3 million (€ 29.8m; 2005: CHF 60.6m/€ 37.4m), taking into account depreciations of CHF 34.5 million (€ 21.3 m; 2005: CHF 46.1m/€ 28.5m). Investments total CHF 20.4 million (€ 12.6m; 2005: CHF 32.7m/€ 20.2m). Swiss Exhibition concludes that it substantially strengthened its international market position. ■

Project taking shape

The public review process for the **Exhibition Center Basel 2012** project got underway on April 10 at the Canton Basel-City Building and Planning Office. The plans by Basel-based architects Herzog & de Meuron extend Hall 1 towards the Exhibition Square, replacing the present head-end structure, redesign Building 3 next to the car park and link the two new three-storey hall complexes by a twostorey superstructure over the Exhibition Square. A multifunctional event hall will be installed on the ground floor of the new-look Hall 3. It will also serve to replace the grand festival hall. Modernisation was driven mainly by the fact that Hall 6 – the Hall of Universe for Baselworld, the international watch and jewellery fair – will no longer be available after 2011. Costing in the region of CHF 350 million (€ 214m), work on the project begins in 2009. Swissbau 2012 will then mark the test of fire for the new hall complexes. ■

Working partnership

FachPack + PrintPack + LogIntern take off from September 25 to 27 at **Nuremberg Exhibition Centre**. Then in 2008 Nuremberg's packaging trio takes its rotational breather. An ideal time for Swiss Exhibition to launch Pack&Move, its reworked trade fair for integrated logistics solutions and packaging technology, from November 18 to 21, 2008 at Basel Exhibition Center. NürnbergMesse and Swiss Exhibition have agreed a working partnership, from which exhibitors and visitors at both trade shows will benefit. In future the industry Europe-wide can look forward to a reliable autumn date for packaging and intralogistics. ■

PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

Katja Havemeister (29) is augmenting the Press and Public Relations department at Deutsche Messe in Hanover. Together with **Ulrich Koch**, who retires at the end of September, she is responsible for the daily and business press, radio and TV.

Kai Hattendorf (36) will assume leadership of Corporate Communications at Messe Frankfurt on July 1. In this post, he will take over responsibility for Corporate Press / PR and Corporate Publishing / Internal Communication, as well as Corporate Marketing Communication and the EU Affairs department. He succeeds **Jens Schreiber**, who left the company at the beginning of the year.

The Board of Directors of Fiera Milano S.p.A. confirmed in April another term in office for the incumbent chairman, **Giuseppe Zola**, and CEO **Maurizio Lupi** at the subsidiary Fiera Milano Congressi. **Sergio Maggioni** and

Costante Casali were also re-appointed as chairman and CEO of Edizioni Fiera Milano, while **Graziella Martini Giobbi** was named honorary chairman of Fiera Milano International. For Expocts, the Board renewed the appointment of incumbent chairman **Adalberto Corsi**, while concurrently appointing **Corrado Peraboni** as CEO to replace the outgoing officer **Carlo Bassi**. Bassi will continue his relationship with the Fiera Milano Group in the role of assistant to the parent company's CEO, **Claudio Artusi**. Assuming the chairman's seat at Fiera Food System will be **Giulio Gallera**, an attorney, flanked by the currently serving CEO, **Corrado Schwartz**. A sole administrator position was established for the subsidiary Expopage; this office will be filled by **Sebastian Kuester**. For Rassegne, the Board appointed **Fabio Dadati** chairman, to succeed the outgoing officer **Corrado Peraboni**.

Promotional facelift

Deutsche Messe has given itself a new outfit. Not only has its logo been modified, there has also been a change of layout. The exhibition company in Hanover wants to be perceived by new and existing clients as an active partner in their development and success. This serviced-focused positioning is intended to underscore Deutsche Messe's claim to provide its exhibitors and visitors with premium service across the board, as reflected in the revamp of the company's website and its new corporate design. Deutsche Messe is looking to position itself even more clearly in the market as a top-notch organiser of international leader fairs. ■

Drop in product piracy

The "Messe Frankfurt against Copying" campaign launched in January 2006 is now also being rolled out at international events. After **Auto-mechanika** in Buenos Aires and **Shanghai**, at least another three international fairs are to follow suit this year, so **Detlef Braun**, managing director Messe Frankfurt, announced in Frankfurt. Braun rated the campaign a success, saying the number of confiscations at the fairs Heimtextil,

Paperworld, Beauty World and Christmasworld had dropped significantly year on year. At Heimtextil there were no more confiscations by the customs authorities and inquiries and consultations dropped 18 %. ■

Contract renewed

Messe Frankfurt and **DEMAT GmbH**, one of the foremost private exhibition organisers in Germany, are continuing their successful collaboration. The contract has been renewed for another five years. **Uwe Behm**, a managing director at Messe Frankfurt: "Following **Achema**, the **IAA** motor show and the **Book Fair** we have now also renewed the master agreement for our fourth largest guest fair, **Euro-Mold**, with its organisers **DEMAT GmbH**." ■

In brief

Germany has defended its top position in Europe as a destination for meetings and conventions. According to the new International Association Meetings Market 2006 survey by the International Congress & Convention Association (ICCA), Germany is number one in Europe for the third

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time running and number two worldwide after the USA. The other ranks have seen a lot of shifting. For example, Spain, last year's number three, has now dropped to number five.

Under the new law on tourism that came into force on January 1, the Foundation for Tourism and Unireso put in place a single transport ticket aimed at facilitating travel by public transport for more than a million visitors who stay in the Swiss canton of **Geneva** each year. This card contributes to the quality of the reception given to Geneva's guests who stay in a hotel, youth hostel or at a campsite. The improvement in tourist services will obviously be convenient when visiting Geneva Palexpo, which is served directly and within a radius of a few hundred metres by several public transport routes and by train via Geneva Airport station.

Messe Frankfurt and T-Systems have expanded their cooperation and extended it for another five years. The agreement comprises comprehensive development of the IT infrastructure to further optimise facilities for exhibitors at Messe Frankfurt. The new project will increase bandwidth for Internet access, providing fast and secure links at exhibition stands for exchanging large volumes of data with external servers. A telephone flat rate is also being introduced enabling exhibitors to place calls all over the world on the basis of a calculable pricing model.

An assistance centre for disabled visitors was opened at **Fiera Milano**. The "Disabled Visitors Assistance Centre", located in the Service Centre at the Rho exhibition complex, sets out to create the conditions required to allow disabled visitors to travel to the exhibition complex and visit events as comfortably as possible. This project, developed by the Lombardia Paraplegics Association with the support of Fiera Milano, the Regional Council of Lombardy, the Provincial Council of Milan and the City Council of Milan, provides services in three main areas: information, reception and assistance.

GL events has signed a memorandum of understanding to acquire Promotor International, **Bologna**. The deal will be finalised early in July following due diligence. The Italian organiser of such prestigious trade fairs as Bologna's international Motor Show attracts more than one million visitors a year with 140,000 m² of exhibition space. Promotor International forecasts sales of € 32 million in 2007 and an Ebitda ratio in excess of 15 %. ■

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