



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.

Strengthen international market position

Mr. Kamm, on January 1, 2009 you took office as EMECA's new president. How would you describe sentiment at present in the association and what are your plans?

René Kamm: The atmosphere between the association members is excellent and driven by the desire to network and learn from one another. At last November's general assembly in Paris mounting concern over world economic developments was already clearly apparent. Our colleagues from southern Europe in particular were already beginning to feel the first repercussions of the crisis last year. I expect to see most European exhibition centres having to contend increasingly in 2009 and 2010 with a drop in visitor and exhibitor numbers and declining revenues. This means my two-year presidency comes at a difficult period. My aim is to continue to improve communication within EMECA and to offer members at our regular meetings suggestions and ideas on how to cope with the troubled market environment.

Your predecessor Marc Granier already pushed actively to intensify exhibition policy and lobbying, particularly with the European Commission. How are things proceeding on this front? Do you, as a Swiss, perceive any conflict of interests in this task?

The fact that a few months ago we relocated the EMECA Secretariat from Paris to Brussels is arguably the best proof of our intention to carry this relationship further forward. Even though Switzerland is not a member of the EU – instead of which it has bilateral agreements with the Union – the Swiss are anything but “anti-European”... On the contrary, their own more than 700-year experi-



René Kamm, CEO MCH and new EMECA president

ence means the Swiss are very much alive to the difficulty of combining diverse cultural and language areas into a federation. Only a few weeks ago, in a referendum my compatriots clearly endorsed extension of the free movement of persons under the treaties I mentioned to include the new EU states Romania and Bulgaria.

In the light of the current economic turmoil, how is Europe's role as the foremost exhibition destination looking?

The present economic crisis is a new phenomenon in terms of its dimension and global synchronisation. I am convinced that the well established trade fair venues and exhibition markets in Europe will strengthen their international market position in the crisis.

There's plenty going on in your own company, MCH Swiss Exhibition (Holding) Ltd. You will shortly change your name to MCH Group. Why, and what does this mean for your business and your clients?

In the past years we have gradually evolved from a location-bound exhibition company into an international live marketing group. Organising trade fairs and renting out exhibition infrastructure is an important but not the sole part of our service spectrum; today we are internationally active in the event service business through our various subsidiaries. The new name MCH Group for the holding company and the "global live marketing" claim better embrace our diversified and more global alignment. Within the holding, in addition to Event Service there will still be the exhibition companies MCH Basel Exhibition and MCH Zurich Exhibition. From what I have said it should be clear that nothing will change for our various companies' many thousands of customers. ■

Working Group meetings in Brussels

Besides the EU Working Group active for five years now, at the end of February 2009 the newly founded Technical Working Group met for the first time in Brussels in the association office. Following the welcome address by Secretary General Jörn Kronenwerth, the coordinator Giovanni Colombo (VeronaFiere) presented an opening document to the 12 delegates present from eight associated members (Frankfurt, Milan, Valencia, Brussels, Bologna, Utrecht, Nuremberg and Verona). After an interesting round table discussion the decision was taken to launch activities with a "really well done" internal technical questionnaire, to be distributed to the EMECA members. The next steps will be a restricted meeting in Milan to study the draft structure of the document and discuss the university consultant to be involved in the research. ■

Repositioning as MCH Group

At the upcoming general assembly on May 8, 2009, the proposal will be put forward to change the company's name from MCH Swiss Exhibition (Holding) to **MCH Group**. The new corporate design has been developed by the London-based agency Made Thought. The Group's self perception is expressed in the "Global Live Marketing" claim. Moreover, the event agency Rufener Events in Zurich is being integrated retroactively as of January 1, 2009 under the MCH Swiss Exhibition (Holding) umbrella. The Group is thus adding a further dimension to its core competences. Within the MCH Group Rufener Events will continue to be managed as an independent subsidiary with Hans-Jürg Rufener at the helm. With the acquisition of the event agency, MCH Group now takes in the two exhibition companies in Basel and Zurich – MCH Swiss Exhibition (Basel) Ltd. and MCH Swiss Exhibition (Zurich) Ltd. – together with the service companies Winkler Veranstaltungstechnik AG, Expomobilia AG and Rufener Events Ltd., all of which come under the auspices of MCH Swiss Exhibition (Holding). ■

New legal status

The owning and managing foundations of Geneva Palexpo have undergone legal restructuring to form a new private-sector public limited company under the name of **Palexpo SA**. Its purpose is to own, manage and commercially operate the Geneva Palexpo complex. On January 1, 2009, the Fondation Orgexpo transferred all its activities to Palexpo SA. ■

The EMECA Technical Working Group met for the first time in February (from left to right): Marcello Missaglia, Stefano Luccietto, Enrique Fontes, Christian Foos, Giovanni Colombo, Enrica Baccini, R.C. van der Heijden, Johan de Deygere, Roberta Bini, Jörn Kronenwerth.



Welcome to Paris

Aéroports de Paris, Comité Regional Du Tourisme Paris Ile-de-France, Comité des Expositions De Paris & Viparis have signed the official protocol agreement for the creation, funding and launch of the Paris "Welcome Pack", a complete programme aimed at welcoming, informing, guiding and transporting visitors, exhibitors and delegates to international events held in the various **Viparis** venues in Paris & Ile de France. The Paris "Welcome Pack" is comprised of four major components: Welcoming – event banners, placed upon arrival for visitors to Paris, delivering a welcome message from the organisers. Informing – event visitors are greeted by bilingual hostesses in kiosks inside the customs zones of the Paris airports and on the platforms of the Gare de Lyon and Gare de l'Est railway stations. Guiding – large, high-visibility signage shepherding visitors, exhibitors and delegates to specially chartered shuttle services and signage on the major arterial roads and around the venues themselves enhance event visibility. Transporting – free, efficient shuttle services from airports to the Viparis venues provide a more comfortable journey. ■

Aiming for € 300 million sales in 2020

NürnbergMesse is setting out with ambitious growth targets: "By 2020 we aim to double our revenues from € 150 m at present to € 300 m and become one of the ten biggest exhibition companies in the world," says Managing Director Bernd A. Diedrichs. He is looking to make Nuremberg into the fifth largest exhibition company in Germany. For the exhibition year 2009 the CEO is eyeing revenues of between € 130 and € 150 m. "This relatively wide margin is not dictated by business uncertainty. On the contrary, we are planning further acquisitions in 2009, which would be reflected positively in our turnover." NürnbergMesse is planning systematic internationalisation, establishing its exhibitions in all important world economic regions. ■

Refurbished digital home

Messe Frankfurt has launched its newly designed internet presence. Sporting a completely new design and a new structure, the website

PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

Dominique Bernard stepped down on January 16 as chief general manager of Comexpo-sium, Paris, in agreement with the supervisory board. Since the beginning of February 2008 he had successfully taken forward the merger between Comexpo (CCPIT) and Expositum (Unibail Rodamco). The supervisory board of France's foremost exhibition organiser announced **Bernard Becker** as his successor. Becker was previously chief executive of Tarsus France, before which the 57 year-old worked for Reed Expositions Europe.

At the beginning of the year **Thorsten Oestreich** took over as head of the Marketing Department within the corporate communications division at Messe Frankfurt. He was previously Marketing Manager for Microsoft.

Christoph Neuenschwander joined the group management of MCH. Within the group he will hold the newly created post of Chief Development Officer (CDO), focusing on strategic development of the group as a whole and its operative subsidiaries, particularly in the Event Services business unit.

Markus Söder, Bavarian State Minister of the Environment and Public Health, has been appointed chairman of NürnbergMesse's supervisory board. He follows retired State Minister **Eberhard Sinner**, who stepped down from office last October. Also newly appointed were State Secretary **Katja Hessel** from the Bavarian State Ministry for Economics, the Infrastructure, Transport and Technology and State Secretary **Franz Josef Pschierer**, Bavarian State Ministry of Finance.

www.messefrankfurt.com presents content on the company as the first stage of the relaunch. In all, the globally operative group operates some 150 websites. In the coming months all Messe Frankfurt's web presences will find their digital home in the new portal. The introduction of new features and the further development of existing applications are additionally planned. ■

New service opportunities

Messe Frankfurt and Xing are planning exclusive collaboration on the joint development of online communities and services for visitors to its exhibitions. A Letter of Intent to this effect was signed recently in Frankfurt. In the coming months, following a successful trial period Germany's foremost exhibition company and the leading online network for business contacts in Europe intend to develop a number of products and applications. Two dedicated community offers for exhibitors, visitors and parties interested in the Musikmesse and Prolight+Sound are now launching on the Xing platform as the first joint activities. The new offers can be accessed at the websites musikmesse.

xing.com and proligh-sound.xing.com.

But Frankfurt is also committed to Twittering. The microblogging site has secured itself a place in the exhibition company's communications network and could be used among other things in future as an ad hoc information channel for the interested public. ■

Best results and new hall

VeronaFiere closed 2008 with turnover of € 88 million, up by 20 % compared to 2007 and 32 % higher than in 2005 (the reference year by event typology); the gross operating margin came to € 15 m (+16.5 %) with pre-tax profits of € 7.55 m (+20 %), far outperforming the general targets set out in the business plan. Investments totalling € 13 m went on building the new Hall 1 and upgrading infrastructures and internal services.

In time for the 43rd Vinitaly in April, the new Hall 1 will be completed to ensure 3,400 m² of show area. Its 2,000 m² of solar panel roofing will generate electricity equal to that required each year by more than 30 households. ■

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In brief

The initiative “**Messe Frankfurt against Copying**” continued to bear fruit at the Paperworld, Christmasworld and Beautyworld fairs 2009. During customs checks on the weekend officials discovered suspicious products at 64 stands. That is one-third less than in 2008, although about 120 more booths were scrutinised than 12 months earlier.

The latest issue of **International Tradeshow Directory** was published by **m+a Verlag**, Frankfurt, at the end of January. On 850 pages it provides extensive information on more than 9,000 fairs and exhibitions in 116 countries. Published are leader fairs of international relevance as well as regional consumer goods shows.

Just in time for the beginning of Domotex, the world's biggest flooring tradeshow, in January, **Deutsche Messe** has taken its new **North 1 entrance** into operation. The purpose-built glass and steel construction replaces the old entrance hall, which for more than 40 years served as the highest-visitor-traffic entrance to Hanover fairground.

A new fair, which will be known as **Fruit Attraction**, is being organised jointly by **Ifema**, Madrid, and the Spanish Federation of Fruit, Vegetable, Flower and Live Plant Producing Exporters (Fepex). The Fruit & Vegetables Trade Show will present an innovative format, one designed to match the industry, according to the organisers. It will debut November 4 to 6, 2009 at Feria de Madrid.

As a further step in **Rimini Fiera's** on-going environmentally-conscious policy, the exhibition centre has now been equipped with a central heating system featuring a new condensing boiler with heating capacity of 380 kW. This replaces the old boiler with a forced draught burner, which had a capacity of 450 kW. The new boiler will cut nitrogen oxide emissions in Rimini by 90 %.

The broadest showcase in the industry for renewable and conventional energies is to take place November 25 to 27, 2009 at **Feria Valencia**. Many brands have already confirmed their participation at the first edition of **Egética-Expoenergetica**. The trade fair is the product of an alliance between two shows whose goal is to offer the best platform for all agents involved in the generation and distribution of renewable and conventional energies. ■

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