

Press

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Final report

ISH

The world's leading trade fair for the Bathroom Experience, Building, Energy and Air-Conditioning Technology and Renewable Energies Frankfurt am Main, 10 to 14 March 2009

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Target achieved: over 200,000 visitors to the ISH trade fair

Bucking the trend: increase in international visitors – one in three visitors from outside Germany

Crisis-resistant: sustainability, efficiency and renewable energies provide boost to the sector

A total of 202,000 visitors came to Frankfurt am Main for the international leading trade fair ISH, which took place between 10 and 14 March (2007: 217,000). This year sees the ISH, together with the plumbing, heating and air-conditioning sector that it represents, continue its 50-year success story even in the current difficult economic environment. At the same time, the event recorded a rise in the proportion of visitors from outside Germany, thereby bucking the general trend. This increased significantly from a quarter in 2007 to just under a third (30 percent). With 2,361 companies from 58 countries, the Frankfurt exhibition grounds were fully booked, as was the case at the 2007 event (2,372 exhibitors).

Dr. Michael Peters, Member of the Messe Frankfurt Board of Management: "Our expectations were surpassed. This outcome is clinching proof that positive development is both possible and important in times of crisis too. This is because it shows that future-oriented solutions are still in great demand. And above all the marked increase in interest from international visitors demonstrates the enviable position enjoyed by the industry and the ISH worldwide. In its anniversary year, the ISH continues to provide an important impetus to the market – we have received constant confirmation of

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this in our extensive interaction with sector players and from the impressively positive mood that prevails here.”

According to the surveys conducted by Messe Frankfurt during the ISH, the sector is resistant to the economic crisis. In particular the trend for consumers to spend more time at home – together with growing demand for and interest in sustainable sanitary solutions and efficient heating and air-conditioning systems with renewable energies – gives rise to optimism within the industry. Some three-quarters of exhibitors view the current economic climate within the sector as good or satisfactory; particularly noteworthy is that German manufacturers give higher ratings than their overseas counterparts: 84 percent good to satisfactory compared with 66 percent. In 2008, the German heating and plumbing sector generated turnover of almost €40 billion and, when fitting work is included, provides work to some 400,000 people.

Heating and air-conditioning technology is represented at the ISH by some 1,300 companies from Germany and abroad, including all market leaders. Approximately 45 percent of buyers visit the fair primarily owing to the range of solutions for efficient systems and renewable energies being showcased. Klaus Jesse, who is a member of the steering committee of the German Central Heating Industry Association (VdZ) and President of the German Industrial Association for Building, Energy and Environmental Technology (BDH): “This year’s event confirmed once again that the ISH is where decision-makers from Germany and all over the world come together. We were very positively surprised by the high visitor count and, above all, by the high quality of the visitors. In spite of the weaker overseas markets, there was an increase in the share of customers from abroad. The central theme was the systems approach: on almost all stands, manufacturers presented the twin climate protection strategy pursued by the heating sector and German politicians: energy-efficient heating systems that are based on renewable energies. The high representation of the sector here leaves no doubt that they will provide consumers with the right answers for saving costs and energy, thereby helping to protect the environment. Our industry is

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confident that it will retain the market volume of the previous year – at least in Germany.”

Over 700 manufacturers presented their wares as part of the Bathroom Experience – the world’s largest showroom for innovative design and sustainability in the plumbing sector. Approximately a third of visitors came primarily with a view to finding out more about new international developments in sustainable bathroom solutions.

Andreas Dornbracht, Chairman of the German Plumbing Industry Association (VDS): “For the VDS and the exhibitors at the Bathroom Experience, this year’s anniversary event was a resounding success. Above all, the high number of overseas visitors made it clear that, especially in these difficult times, the ISH is seen as the flagship fair for its industry – a promise that it does not fail to deliver. An important trend in bathroom design is the development of sustainable plumbing solutions geared towards more responsible usage of the scarce resource that is water. The efforts that have already been made by the German plumbing industry in this regard have been conveyed effectively by the “Blue Responsibility” information campaign. Accordingly, this year’s ISH has left us with an even firmer belief that our sector will remain resistant to the economic crisis.”

Exhibitor ratings for this year’s ISH have once again been very positive. 82 percent of exhibitors confirmed that their participation targets had been reached (2007: 84 percent). Providers had particular praise for the internationality and high quality of visitors, the number of new contacts made and the level of orders placed during the trade fair.

Reflecting the breakdown of products and services on show at the ISH, the main interest of visitors was divided equally between heating/air-conditioning technology and the Bathroom Experience. Michael von Bock und Polach, General Manager of the Central Association of the German Plumbing, Heating and Air-Conditioning Industry (ZVSHK): “The 2009 ISH has provided a welcome counterpoint to the general doom and gloom. The plumbing, heating and air-conditioning sector demonstrated impressively why it will be

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able to prove itself resistant to the economic crisis in the coming months. It offers a wide range of innovative products and services that allow house-owners to retain or even increase the value of their properties in uncertain times such as these. We see this as being a very promising area of business for our industry experts in the coming years. Once again, trade specialists made up the largest visitor group – a fact that underlines the sustained success of the established ISH trade fair concept. The ISH is a systems exhibition that focuses on plumbing, heating and air-conditioning technology in equal measure. This is exactly what our people are looking for.”

Approximately two-thirds of the over 200,000 visitors are managers with high decision-making competence. Trade specialists were the largest group, with over 80,000 fitters in attendance. Other key visitor groups included engineers, architects, designers, planners and retailers. After Germany, the top ten visitor countries were: Italy, the Netherlands, France, Switzerland, Austria, Belgium, the UK, Poland, Sweden and Spain.

The next ISH will take place from 15 to 19 March 2011 in Frankfurt am Main.

Picture material: Photos in printable quality and further information can be found at www.ish.messefrankfurt.com.

Background information on Messe Frankfurt

Messe Frankfurt is Germany's largest trade fair organiser, with 436 million euros in sales in 2008 (figure as of November 2008) and more than 1,400 employees worldwide. The Messe Frankfurt Group has a global network of 29 subsidiaries, five branch offices and 48 international Sales Partners, giving it a presence for its customers in more than 150 countries. Events “made by Messe Frankfurt” take place at more than 30 locations around the globe. In 2008, Messe Frankfurt organised more than 100 trade fairs, of which more than half took place outside Germany.

Messe Frankfurt's exhibition grounds, featuring 322,000 square metres of exhibition space, are currently home to nine exhibition halls and an adjacent Congress Center. The company is publicly owned, with the City of Frankfurt holding 60 percent and the State of Hesse 40 percent.

For more information, please visit our website at: www.messefrankfurt.com