

BalticBusiness Quarterly

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future of historical
wooden buildings**

"From the point of
sustainability, this is a long-
term investment – and another
level of quality of life."

Focus on Hybrid Trade Fairs



Messe Düsseldorf is one of the largest companies in the trade fairs industry. Wolfram N. Diener was appointed as President & CEO of Messe Düsseldorf recently. Baltic Business Quarterly put several questions to him to enable our readers to get to know him better.

by LĪVA MELBĀRZDE

Mr. Diener, could you please tell us a little about your professional experience before you became CEO of Messe Düsseldorf?

I have spent almost my entire professional life in the trade fair business. I was first allowed to organize large events in 1991 for the State Garden Show in Pforzheim, Baden-Württemberg, where I was in charge of the catering and events department for over half a year. After Pforzheim and five years in Hamburg, Messe Frankfurt sent me to Asia as a member of the Board of Management at the age of 33. I could not turn down such an offer. In Shanghai, I then spent four years as Managing Director of a joint venture involving the German trade fair companies of Düsseldorf, Munich and Hanover, the Shanghai New International Expo Centre Ltd. That was an exciting time with a lot of dynamism. Until then there had only been smaller exhibition centres in Asia. After various management positions at Asian trade fair and congress companies, I was a member of the management board of UBM Asia Ltd. In Hong Kong until 2018 – UBM was the world's second largest organizer at that time and is now part of the Informa Group. I worked for Las Vegas Sands to build up their trade show and convention center in Asia. And then Messe Düsseldorf knocked on my door.

What do you see as the three most important strategic tasks you want to achieve in this position?

First and foremost, of course, is the strengthening of our trade fairs. We also

plan to expand our range of services – both analogue and digital. We were already very well positioned digitally even before Corona. Hybrid trade fairs are not really new for us, as we have been accompanying our trade fairs with various digital services for a long time. But of course we will continue to expand this area. For example, glasstec VIRTUAL, the first purely digital event organised by Messe Düsseldorf, will take place in October 2020. This is a service for exhibitors participating in glasstec 2021. In general, we will continue to focus on hybrid formats as there is no substitute for on-site presence. A special focus will also be on foreign business. The national exhibition market is highly saturated. Growth is almost only possible by displacement, for example through spin-offs. This means that individual segments are spun off from an existing trade fair and installed as independent events. I see much greater potential abroad. If our financial situation permits, we will talk about acquisitions abroad. I am not just referring to trade fairs that fit into our existing portfolio. It is important to me to be open-minded, which means that I generally do not close my mind to any new trade fair topic if it seems promising – and that includes both Germany and abroad.

Because of COVID-19 you became CEO of Messe Düsseldorf during a difficult time. How quickly do you think the trade fair business will recover and in what direction is it actually developing?

Of course, this depends very much on

the further development of the pandemic, which is very difficult for everyone to assess because of its dynamics. However, it is particularly important, especially in a time of crisis, to provide companies with a platform for their new products, innovations and trends. Messe Düsseldorf's hygiene and infection protection standards ensure that the safety and health of our exhibitors, visitors, partners and employees are protected in the best possible way. We are also in close contact with the health authorities in order to implement any new measures for the exhibition grounds. Everyone is taking action to make trade fairs a safe experience, even in these times. I could well imagine that people will reduce their willingness to travel, even if we hopefully soon have the virus under control. The trend could then move towards smaller, more local trade fairs as spin-offs of the world's leading trade fairs, due to shorter journeys.

What do you think about virtual fairs? Do they have a future?

In my opinion, the technology is simply not yet so advanced that virtual measurement offers an efficient and user-friendly platform like a physical trade show does. This may of course change in the future. But in my experience, the personal relationships and the small casual experiences during a trade fair are not so easily replaced by digital solutions. That's why we focus on hybrid trade fairs that combine the advantages of both areas. This works very well, especially in the field of matchmaking. The tool brings exhibitor representatives and visitors together even before the trade fair begins and allows them to make appointments. This makes the trade fair visit more efficient for both sides.

Do you see an opportunity for closer cooperation with Baltic trade fairs, e.g. by mutually advertising exhibitors?

Until recently our corporation didn't want to engage with other trade show organizers in –Europe. However, we meanwhile wouldn't rule this out as long as it fits our strategy.

Training on Preparation for Fair Participation

FAIR to SHARE

Practical workshop for preparing the marketing strategy of the company for participating in a fair.

- How to prepare for a fair?
- Why hundreds of companies across the whole world participate in fairs?
- How to draw the attention during a fair and which aspects could be benefitted from the most?

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www.ahk-balt.org



New security concepts for trade fairs in Germany

Basic points of hygiene concepts and social distancing measures for minimising the risk of infection at the exhibition

MEASURES WE HAVE TAKEN

Reorganisation. For instance, with adjusted capacity of people and areas, distance markings, increased staffing, transparent partition walls, information signs and visitor guidance systems.

Hand and surface disinfection. Numerous possibilities of hand disinfection placed throughout the exhibition centre: sanitiser dispensers located in entrances, halls, hall transitions and toilet facilities. Highly exposed surfaces will be regularly cleaned and disinfected.

Wide and open doors. The doors will be wide open for you. Easy for you to enter – and leave: by separate entrances and exits.

Ensuring as good air quality as possible. Good aeration of entry areas, halls and conference rooms by modern ventilation installation. Reducing the microorganisms in the air that we breathe.

Crowd management. Stream of visitors is controlled at entry areas and within the halls by consistent crowd management to avoid a high concentration of people.

Your online ticket, please. Admission tickets are exclusively sold online for each day. For you this means: no ticket counters, no cash payments. And for us: a constant eye on the number of visitors present.

First aid. Our medical service at every trade fair. Highly skilled – and always ready to assist.

Safe distance. Ensuring enough distance so you can forego your face mask while seated, but don't have to forego our exciting accompanying events.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Networking without physical contact. Even though you might be delighted at seeing other people again or closing a successful business deal – please forego shaking hands and physical contact.

Eyes wide open – mouth and nose closed. Please wear a face mask (which you can remove outdoors and when seated) to protect all trade fair participants. And although you might not be able to see it, we are smiling at you behind our masks.

Still close up. Keeping a minimum distance of 1.5 metre between all persons on the exhibition centres.

Despite increasing numbers of infections, many German organisers are planning a re-start in autumn 2020 after the lockdown caused by the corona pandemic. The federal states have so far signalled a thumbs-up in many cases and have specified rules for hygiene and social distancing. On this basis, the organisers have developed concepts for each trade fair individually in close cooperation with the responsible authorities in order to protect your health. The large-scale and modern exhibition centres in Germany offer good conditions for implementing these concepts.

Cough and sneeze etiquette. For the sake of yourself and others, please sneeze or cough into the crook of your arm. Even better, do so while maintaining a distance of at least one metre or turning away from other persons. Wash or sanitize your hands after each cough or sneeze.

BACK TO BUSINESS AT EXHIBITION STANDS

More room to spread out. Whether at your exhibition stand, in ventilated conference cubicles without ceilings or throughout the entire exhibition centre.

Observance of strict sanitary rules on the exhibition centres. Especially frequent cleaning cycles for shared facilities and contact surfaces.

Deli food to go. Our catering partners in each exhibition hall offer tailor-made concepts in compliance with all safety and hygiene rules.

Networking in focus – according to new rules. Always a good reason to celebrate the latest products presented in the exhibition area. However, this time without stand parties. You are welcome to take everything you are offered – without putting it back.

urnia, Messe Düsseldorf, 08/2020

Trade fair restart in Germany from September 2020

The recovery of the exhibition business is taking place in the same order as the pandemic affected the global exhibition market (first the Asian market, then the European market). At the beginning of July 2020, the first trade fairs of German organisers were successfully held in China after the Corona break. All events were carried out in compliance with strict hygiene regulations, including the obligation to wear mouth and nose protection, and temperature measurements were carried out on the exhibition grounds. Following the decision made by the government, and with a full compliance with the hygiene and distance rules, the trade fairs in Germany will take place again as real-life events from September 2020. Many exhibition organisers have developed new formats for this autumn with modified concepts and newly defined visitor target groups. Some of them will be held completely in a virtual way, some will be held on-site combined with a digital offer and same as an invite-only events, which will put a strict limit on the number of attendees.



Electronica China 2020

SEPTEMBER - DECEMBER 2020	TRADE FAIR	INDUSTRY	NEXT DATE 2021-2022
SEPTEMBER 03 - 05 BERLIN NEW format	IFA The Global Innovations Show B2B.IFA-BERLIN.COM	CONSUMER ELECTRONICS, MULTIMEDIA	September 03 - 08, 2021
SEPTEMBER 04 - 13 DÜSSELDORF	CARAVAN SALON DÜSSELDORF The World's Largest Trade Fair for Motor Homes Und Caravans CARAVAN-SALON.DE	VEHICLES, LEISURE, HOBBY, DIY, TOURISM	September 2021
SEPTEMBER 04 - 06 DÜSSELDORF	TOURNATUR The Outdoor Enthusiast's Show for Destinations and Equipment, Hiking, Trekking, Discover Nature TOURNATUR.COM	OUTDOOR, SPORT, TOURISM	September 2021
SEPTEMBER 08 - 10 MÜNICH NEW format	DIGITAL IFAT IMPACT BUSINESS SUMMIT World's Leading Trade Fair for Water, Sewage, Waste and Raw Materials Management IFAT.DE	CITY SANITATION, WATER TECHNOLOGY, WASTE DISPOSAL, ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION	May 30 – June 30, 2022
OCTOBER 14 - 15 MÜNICH NEW format	EXPO REAL HYBRID SUMMIT International Trade Fair for Property and Investment EXPOREAL.NET	REAL ESTATE, INVESTMENT	October 2021
OCTOBER 19 - 22 MÜNICH Postponement	ANALYTICA World's Leading Trade Fair for Laboratory Technology, Analysis, Biotechnology and Analytica Conference ANALYTICA.DE	LABORATORY TECHNOLOGY, BIOTECHNOLOGY	June 21 – 24, 2022
NOVEMBER 10 - 13 MÜNICH	ELECTRONICA World's Leading Trade Fair and Conference for Electronics ELECTRONICA.DE	ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING, ELECTRONICS, COMPONENTS	November 2022
NOVEMBER 16 - 19 DÜSSELDORF	MEDICA and COMPAMED World Forum for Medicine and International Trade Fair High Tech Solutions for Medical Technology MEDICA.DE/COMPAMED.DE	MEDICINE, IT MEDICINE, IT, HEALTH	November 2021
NOVEMBER 19 - 22 BERLIN	BOOT & FUN BERLIN The Whole World of Water Sports BOOT-BERLIN.DE	BOATS, BOAT ACCESSORIES, SPORTING GOODS	November 2021
DECEMBER 01 - 03 DÜSSELDORF	VALVE WORLD EXPO International Valve Trade Fair and Conference VALVEWORLD EXPO.COM	METALWORKING, WELDING TECHNOLOGY, SUBCONTRACTING	December 2022
DECEMBER 01 - 04 HAMBURG Postponement	WINDENERGY HAMBURG The Global On & Offshore Event WINDENERGYHAMBURG.COM	ENERGY	September 2022
DECEMBER 07 - 11 DÜSSELDORF Postponement	TUBE and WIRE International Tube and Pipe Trade Fair International Wire and Cable Trade Fair TUBE.DE/WIRE.DE	METALWORKING, WELDING TECHNOLOGY	April 2022
DECEMBER 08 - 11 MÜNICH Postponement	AUTOMATICA Leading Trade Fair for Smart Automation and Robotics AUTOMATICA-MÜNICH.COM	COMPUTER-AIDED ENGINEERING, FACTORY AUTOMATION	June 2022