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h+h cologne 2017: The world's largest trade fair for creative handicraft & hobby supplies closes on a record result

- **Around 16,000 trade visitors from all over the globe at h+h cologne**
- **Trade fair confirms its outstanding significance as the most important international order platform of the textile handicraft industry.**

The world's largest trade fair for creative handicraft & hobby supplies, h+h cologne 2017, had achieved record attendance when it came to a close on Sunday (02.04.2017). Around 16,000 top decision-makers and buyers from 75 countries (2016: 68 countries) visited the industry's most important international order platform. That is almost 10 percent more than in the previous year. At the same time, the number of visitors from abroad rose by 16 percent. A significantly higher number of visitors from Denmark, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Austria, Russia, Switzerland and Spain attended h+h cologne. "The continual growth in the number of trade visitors and exhibitors as well as the ever-increasing internationalisation confirm impressively the outstanding significance of h+h cologne as the leading international trade fair of the textile handicraft industry," commented Katharina C. Hamma, Chief Operating Officer of Koelnmesse GmbH.

A decisive criterion for the success of an international leading trade fair is the quality of the trade visitors. This is exactly where h+h cologne scores top grades: The decision-makers come to Cologne. The figures of the visitor survey also confirm this. For example, over 80 percent of the trade visitors are self-employed entrepreneurs, co-owners, CEOs or people in executive positions. The level of decision-making competence is high: 82 percent of the trade audience questioned stated that they have a significant influence on the procurement decisions.

Handicrafts continue to be a popular leisure time activity. This can also be seen from the market figures, which the association Initiative Handarbeit announced in Cologne. The overall market for handicraft supplies in Germany for 2016 is estimated to be Euro 1.25 billion, measured in end consumer prices. A trend survey that the Association of the Textile Trade (BTE) carried out for Initiative Handarbeit foresees good future prospects for the industry. Because the DIY scene is changing, it is becoming more diversified, younger and more closely networked. The result of



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for creative handicraft
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www.hh-cologne.com

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Handarbeit

the survey: Emotionalisation and digitalisation are important to continually provide customers with new inspiration.

This is exactly what Hedi Ehlen, Chairman of the Trade Fair Committee of the Initiative Handarbeit, considers the decisive pioneering role of the international trade fair for handicrafts and hobby to be: "h+h cologne is not only the leading order platform. Beyond this it also provides the industry with decisive impulses for the handicrafts business. Correspondingly many companies at the trade fair once again offered outstanding products in 2017. In order to face the challenges of the future, it is necessary for the trade to be present on all important distribution channels, continued Ehlen. "Here it is particularly important to connect the bricks-and-mortar retail trade with the online retail trade using intelligent concepts." Because today the consumers are increasingly surfing the web and are always looking for new ideas. Suppliers and distributors should work together much more closely online and offline in order to optimally serve the consumers.

The accompanying event programme, which was even more strongly oriented to meet the needs of the specialised trade, was extremely popular. For example, many workshops were aligned to implement the techniques presented as customer loyalty instruments in one's own shop and offered the trade visitors plenty of inspiration for the handicrafts business. The additional benefit for the daily business of the trade visitors was also the focus of the lectures and discussions at the 'my lovely livingroom' event area and these met with great interest especially among the specialised traders.

The next h+h cologne will take place from 23.-25.03.2017.

h+h cologne 2017 in figures

423 exhibiting companies (2016: 399) from 42 countries (2016: 43) took part in h+h cologne 2017, of which 70 percent (2015: 70%) were from abroad. Including estimates for the last day of the fair, around 16,000 visitors from 75 countries (2016: 14,800 visitors from 68 countries) attended h+h cologne 2017. The share of foreign trade visitors was 38 percent.*

*The visitor, exhibitor and exhibition space figures of this trade fair are determined and certified in accordance with the definitions of the FKM - Society for Voluntary Control of Trade Fair and Exhibition Statistics.

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