

Not to be released until: 17 May 2018, 12 noon

Check against delivery!

Remarks by Chief Operating Officer Katharina C. Hamma
at the Koelnmesse Annual Press Conference
at 11:00 a.m. on 17 May 2018 in the Großer Sitzungssaal of the Administration Building
(Messehochhaus)

- Many events post growth in exhibitor and visitor numbers and exhibition area
- The digital transformation is reflected in the trade fairs
- Good results for events held in 2018 as well

Koelnmesse organized a total of 82 trade fairs and exhibitions in 2017. Of these, 27 events for which Koelnmesse is responsible, 23 guest events and four special events were held in Germany. A further 28 trade fairs were held outside Germany. We welcomed over 43,000 exhibiting firms from 119 countries and more than 2.1 million visitors from 218 countries to our events here in Cologne and all over the world.

Many of the events held in Cologne for which Koelnmesse is responsible increased their figures for exhibitors, visitors and stand space by comparison with the respective previous events. In this context I would like to make special mention of interzum, which posted double-digit growth. This international trade fair for suppliers of the furniture and interior design industries once again made a great showing and was more successful than ever before. The International Dental Show also grew in all three parameters – exhibitors, visitors and stand space. In particular, the figures for visitors showed double-digit growth rates. These are outstanding developments that confirm the success of our work.

Other events' efforts to attract new exhibitors were very successful. FSB, dmexco and imm cologne boosted their exhibitor figures significantly by comparison with the respective previous events. Anuga and gamescom posted significant growth in visitor numbers. As a result, Anuga impressively confirmed its position as the world's top international trade fair for the food sector. Our Kind + Jugend event last autumn was able to successfully increase its stand space, among other things.

The excellent development of our trade fairs is also due to the fact that we actively address current trends and social changes. We do this because everything going on around us always has a direct impact on our events and on the way we organize our trade fairs. The claim of our Annual Report neatly sums up our approach: Rethinking trade fairs! This means further developing existing trade fair formats, establishing new events and reflecting social trends.

One of these megatrends is the digital transformation. At the beginning of 2017 we created the area of expertise "Digital Media, Entertainment and Mobility", which consolidates all of our digital know-how regarding trade fairs. In addition to our flagship events in the digital realm such as gamescom and photokina, we are also developing new trade fair formats that respond to our customers' needs related to the digital transformation. Digital Interior Day, which was held for the first time in 2017, focuses specifically on intensifying the sharing of information between companies and innovative start-ups in the interior design sector.

In general, start-ups are becoming increasingly important for our events. Today almost all of our trade fairs have formats in which young companies can present themselves, for example within the framework of start-up villages or start-up competitions. Start-ups are bringing significant new

momentum to trade fairs and to their respective sectors. They are showing us and our customers from the “old economy” where our journey will take us in the future. And, last but not least, in some cases the start-ups of today will be our top customers of tomorrow. In the future we will take advantage of these opportunities for us and our customers even more actively, for example through projects such as the digital campus incube8 and our support for the Cologne Game House.

But in spite of all of the digital transformation, the trade fair as a marketing tool still has an unbeatable home advantage. Visitors can directly experience products and services – taste them, test them and come into direct contact with the manufacturers. Especially in the food and interior design sectors, but also in other areas, the opportunity to experience products directly through touch and our other senses still plays a key role. As a result, the events in our area of expertise “Digital Media, Entertainment and Mobility” are posting the biggest growth rates.

Digitalization also influences the way we advertise our events. A very telling example of that is the veganfach event. Last year it was the only event not focusing on digitalization that was marketed exclusively by digital means to attract both exhibitors and visitors. With a visitor increase of 50 percent, the event was extremely successful. In this case, digital advertising worked because it was directed at a young visitor target group whose trend experts primarily communicate via digital media. This already shows us today the direction in which other sectors will also be developing in the near future.

In conclusion, I'd like to take a look at the highlights we have had so far in the current business year 2018.

Our first event in 2018, imm cologne, posted a considerable increase in non-trade visitors. Approximately 48,000 end consumers came to take a look at the biggest pop-up furniture store in the world. As a result, we have strengthened our position in the German and international markets. ISM and ProSweets Cologne also once again posted excellent results. The strengthened strategic connection between these two events led to a considerable increase in visitor figures for ProSweets Cologne.

The INTERNATIONAL HARDWARE FAIR posted a double-digit increase in visitors. Digitalization was the inspiring trend theme of this event, and it provided future-oriented focal points in the event programme in particular. At the two-day dSummit, visitors could listen to presentations of digital topics; there was a special show on 3D printing; and innovative young companies presented themselves at the Start-up Village. The world's biggest trade fair for handicrafts and hobbies, h+h cologne, grew in all three parameters, in spite of stagnating turnover in the sector due to last year's warm winter. As a result, h+h cologne was able to further expand its position in the specialist trade on the world market.

In March, Anuga FoodTec once again posted high double-digit increases in its figures for exhibitors, visitors and stand space. As the globally leading trade fair for the international food and beverage industry, it offers the entire spectrum of services for the sector – ranging from ingredients to filling and packaging technology and food safety. As a result, it was able to continue improving its market position. And by attracting numerous new top-level exhibitors, it will be able to go on growing in the years ahead.

ART COLOGNE once again impressed visitors with its array of outstanding works of art, thus confirming its position as a leading German art fair. It has established itself as the second-most-important art event in Europe, and its visitors especially praise the quality of the exhibitors.

We are now looking forward to the premiere of THE TIRE COLOGNE, which will open in a few days after more than three years of preparations. It will show what Cologne can offer as a location for a new sector. We expect to welcome about 600 exhibitors and brands from 41 countries – a remarkable set of figures for an initial event here in Cologne.

An outstanding example of our claim to be “rethinking trade fairs” is photokina. In line with the digital transformation, we have developed a new concept for the leading global fair for the imaging sector, and so far we have implemented this concept successfully – photokina is becoming more comprehensive, more virtual and more innovative. Starting in May 2019, the event will switch to an annual format in order to keep up with the rapid developments in the digital sector. Important key players have already agreed to participate in the trade fair in 2019.

An excellent and market-oriented development of events doesn't just happen. It requires a broad knowledge of specific sectors and an intense focus on the expectations of trade fair participants and on future trends in the event business and in live communication.

I'm delighted that on our team at Koelnmesse we have incredibly dedicated employees with lots of experience and a keen eye for possible innovations and new perspectives. That's why I can also speak with a clear conscience for the core team that is responsible for our trade fairs as I join in the optimistic forecasts regarding Koelnmesse's future growth – in terms of both quantity and quality.