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Check against delivery!

**Remarks by Oliver Frese, Chief Operating Officer,
on the Koelnmesse Annual Press Conference
on 20 May 2020, 11:00 a.m., Konrad-Adenauer-Saal in Koelnmesse Congress Centre North**

For me, this is the first event of its kind as Chief Operating Officer of Koelnmesse and I am delighted to have been part of the management team since January 1, 2020.

My first 141 days at Koelnmesse have not, for the most part, gone as planned: while I actually came here to organize, develop and optimize trade fairs, in the past few months we have mostly been canceling or postponing trade fairs. Nevertheless, it has been an exciting time, challenging of course, but also offering many positive experiences, despite coronavirus. The crisis very quickly brought us together as a team and brought me into numerous individual discussions with colleagues, our industries and our service providers. And one thing is for sure: I and all the trade fair teams who I have worked closely with over the past few weeks are rising to the challenge with motivation and confidence for our events from September onwards.

Events from September are precisely what we are talking about here - because it is our declared objective to host trade fairs again in the fall. On May 6, North Rhine-Westphalia set the course for this and allowed trade fairs and congresses to restart under certain conditions. The key thing to bear in mind is: a trade fair is very different to a normal large event. Trade fairs focus on professional business contacts and are driven by economic aspects.

We are already very busy creating the conditions to host a trade fair. We have developed a detailed concept with which we - in line with our annual report - want to "be a role model". I would like to give you a look at our comprehensive simulation tool, which we use to check each individual trade fair to determine what measures we have to take at which locations. For example, we calculate how much space we need or how many people are allowed to enter the exhibition center if we take into account the minimum distance of 1.5 meters. For each of our upcoming trade fairs we have fed in the basic figures such as gross area, net accessible area, number of visitors and exhibitors, etc. The tool then automatically calculates whether we need to make changes to our event space or the number of participants permitted. The result for our first September events, spoga+gafa and spoga horse (autumn): we can host this trade fair and observe the required distance! Since we will only sell tickets online in future and all visitors will be fully registered, we will be able to constantly check the number of people present at the exhibition center. Our turnstiles at the entrances provide additional certainty as they register all entries and exits.

This is just one of many detailed considerations. As well as this, it is a matter of calculating capacities at entrances and avoiding lines, identifying and rectifying hot spots on our grounds and checking the feasibility of side events or conferences. We will make use of the flexibility and size of our exhibition center as well as the possibilities offered by our digital guidance systems and even more extensive technical monitoring to prevent, for example, large crowds of people from forming. Of course, we will also bring in additional hygiene measures, including in our catering, and increase the requirements on our service providers when setting up and dismantling stands. The stands of our exhibitors are also important - because this is where business contacts are established, this is where business is done. There will therefore be concrete guidelines here, for example for entrances and exits, meeting cubicles and for regular cleaning. We are offering our exhibitors special terms during the current crisis: we have extended many registration deadlines and if we have to cancel or postpone an event we will reimburse all payments made to Koelnmesse.

With these and many more measures, we are playing our part in helping our industries return to the trade fairs. I can assure you: we are taking the issue very seriously. The health of all trade fair participants and also of our own employees is our top priority. With this in mind, we will examine every event down to the smallest detail and make decisions on a case-by-case basis. But we also take our role as an international trade fair organizer seriously: the economy urgently needs trade fairs, so that it can return to a certain degree of normality as soon as possible. They show the participating industries the solutions and trends for a successful future. The reactivation of business relationships and the creation of new business will be more important than ever before - and it is our task to actively prepare for this now.

Of course, we are still facing a number of challenges that are hard to envisage at the moment: for example, it is difficult to estimate today the duration and intensity of travel restrictions in the relevant markets. It is about how every exhibitor in each of our industries will be impacted and how this will affect their trade fair involvement. And we can't look into the heads of the visitors and see their personal risk assessment, even beyond the trade fair itself, for example regarding traveling, staying in hotels and eating in restaurants. Therefore, no single event will be able to seamlessly follow on from the development and sales of previous events. We are monitoring developments closely and are in constant communication with the authorities, our subsidiaries, the industries, trade fair participants and service providers.

We are encouraged by the many positive responses we have had from participating exhibitors. For spoga+gafa, for example, where we certainly cannot expect to see the 40,000 visitors registered last year, but we are counting on the visitors seizing their opportunity and expect the gardening industry to be well represented. Things are relatively quiet among exhibitors - our exhibitors see that we are dealing with the situation very carefully, transparently and in their best interest. After the continuous growth of spoga+gafa in recent years, we have reached last year's level despite the circumstances - this is a fantastic sign! We are now called upon to continue communicating transparently with trade fair participants, so that we can forge a path together, taking the official requirements into account.

There is another important topic that is driving us in these times of coronavirus: ongoing digitalization. This concerns digitalization at our exhibition center, the way our staff work and the digitalization of our events. In terms of the latter, we have an important step ahead of us: the first purely digital planned gamescom in August. We are broadening the well-known gamescom now format into a greatly expanded content hub for all content and news in order to get all trade fair participants involved digitally. In addition to "gamescom: Opening Night Live", which was already one of the highest reach gaming shows worldwide last year, we are currently producing new formats: this year will see the first "gamescom: Awesome Indies", with important news about the most anticipated indie titles. Another new feature is the "gamescom: Daily Show", with daily highlights. And, on the last day of the event, the "gamescom: Best Of Show" will round up the highlights and see the presentation of the gamescom award. Our digital concept is groundbreaking in the event scene, and many of the innovations will become an integral part of gamescom in the years to come. And this will all be entirely in the interest of our customers: with the new formats and the opportunity to become an official gamescom partner with their own events, we offer customers numerous opportunities to share their games, announcements and news with millions of gamers worldwide - despite coronavirus.

And digitalization is not only a relevant topic in the B2C segment, but also in B2B: DMEXCO has been "the" meeting place for the digital industry for almost twelve years. The digital industry will gather at DMEXCO once more in 2020. But the current situation poses new challenges: how can we connect the global community this year as well? Our solution: exhibitors, speakers and visitors from all over the world can, parallel to the trade fair in Cologne, take part in DMEXCO 2020 digitally - from

home, from the office or on the go. The basis for this is the DMEXCO app, which launched successfully in 2019 and in 2020 is being expanded into a fully integrated digital event platform. There will be a live conference program with top speakers who can join from all over the world. All DMEXCO visitors will be able to see, hear and experience presentations and seminars live via a large desktop app. And on top of this, visitors and exhibitors will also have the opportunity to get in touch with each other, communicate live and do business together - whether in individual discussions or in small meetings.

Our subsidiary in Singapore is also hosting parts of IDEM digitally in June, and we have already held a digital European press conference for spoga+gafa. At h+h cologne, which we had to postpone until 2021, exhibitors had the opportunity to submit their new products digitally and we marketed them through our channels. This meant that they could communicate their news even without a physical presence at the trade fair. The campaign was very well received and has, among other things, contributed to the fact that currently more than 360 exhibitors have kept their contracts for h+h cologne 2021.

Our goal, especially in times of coronavirus, is to drive digitalization further! But of course: digital trade fairs cannot and should not replace a real-life visit, because personal contact is still what a trade fair is all about, at its core.

While our activities are currently focusing on the impact of coronavirus, I would like to finish by taking a look into the future: as the new COO, I have made it my mission to expand our portfolio. This includes the conceptual enhancement of our existing events, implementing new, surprising formats such as CCXP COLOGNE and branching into completely new sectors, such as the recent insurNXT|CGN in the insurance industry. In close cooperation with our association partners, we are developing new trade fair formats from the portfolio and making sure that our events are fit for the future. This naturally also applies to international trade fairs: we have promising international takeover candidates in the pipeline, with which we hope to further expand Koelnmesse's portfolio.

As you can see, there's a lot going on. Every trade fair that takes place contributes to securing the future - the future of Koelnmesse, the participating industries, the city of Cologne and the state of North Rhine-Westphalia. So let's get started soon - beginning with spoga+gafa and spoga horse (autumn) in early September. I am really looking forward to it!