

Press release

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## Special edition of imm cologne cancelled due to pandemic

Preparations for imm cologne 2022 will get underway in the next few weeks

The special hybrid edition of imm cologne planned for 20 to 23 January 2021 has to be cancelled due to the current developments in the corona pandemic in Europe and Germany. “We’ve had to face the reality, even though it’s painful. In the end, because of the very dynamic way things are developing right now, the uncertainty among our exhibitors and visitors was just too strong. This decision was geared to the interiors industry and made in close consultation with our conceptual sponsor, the VDM (Association of the German Furniture Industry), as well as our exhibitors and partners,” says Gerald Böse, CEO of Koelnmesse. “Because the concept for the special edition was based on the offline and online formats being closely interlinked and mutually dependent, not even a purely digital event made sense under these circumstances,” explains the CEO. With ambista - the global online business network for the furniture and interiors industry - Koelnmesse already combines the most important functions that market players in the furniture and interiors sector need on a daily basis in a single platform,” explains the CEO. “But we’re optimistic about the future and doubly looking forward to 2022, when the industry can gather here in Cologne again and get off to a dynamic start to the year with imm cologne,” says Gerald Böse.

“Over the last few months, ‘*We make it happen*’ was our unambiguous commitment to holding imm cologne in January 2021. With the special edition of imm cologne, we wanted to play an active role in tackling the current crisis. Now we have to abandon that plan. The on-site experience of a trade fair is and always will be something very special, and the developments of recent weeks - and in particular the latest feedback from our customers - have shown that today’s cancellation of the special edition, which we had planned with so much dedication and commitment, is the right decision because it’s appropriate to the situation,” says Oliver Frese, COO of Koelnmesse.

“The fact that imm cologne 2021 can’t take place because of the pandemic is extremely regrettable for our industry. But in view of the worsening corona situation in Germany and many other countries, it’s the right decision. As imm cologne’s conceptual sponsor, we support the decision to cancel the event,” comments Elmar Duffner, President of the Association of the German Furniture Industry (VDM).

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It goes without saying that the organisers in Cologne are disappointed too: “The entire imm cologne team firmly believed that all sorts of things would have been possible with our hygiene and safety concept #B-SAFE4business and the concept for the special hybrid edition,” says Matthias Pollmann, Vice President Trade Fair Management at Koelnmesse. “And a lot of national and international exhibitors and visitors shared that progressive attitude with us. But because of the current situation, not even the special edition of the imm cologne would have been a real gathering place for the interiors sector - and that means it wouldn’t live up to our own standards or those of our exhibitors and visitors,” adds Pollmann.

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### **Preparations for imm cologne 2022 are already underway**

In 2022, imm cologne will take place in physical form as usual, with the addition of a digital supplement. Over the coming weeks, the concept for imm cologne 2022 will be drawn up in conjunction with the industry. “As Europe’s biggest furniture nation, Germany needs imm cologne as the key, leading trade fair. Together with Koelnmesse, we’ll spare no effort in mounting a compelling and innovative imm cologne 2022,” says Jan Kurth, Managing Director of the German Furniture Industry Association (VDM). In January next year, imm cologne will be presenting a sneak preview of the trends, products and relevant themes that will be shaping the year to come, to be released in compact form on a single day. Digital, emotional, in dialogue - i.e. totally in keeping with its brand promise to create a network of people, ideas and pathways to success. The next imm cologne will take place from 19 January to 23 January 2022.