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Trade Fair Professionals meet in Cologne, Germany

Third International Summer University ends successfully

Paris and Cologne – 2 September 2008: A tough agenda was tackled by over 40 trade fair professionals from 10 countries as they exchanged their offices for a classroom in Cologne, Germany, where the 3rd International Summer University for Trade Fair Management (ISU) recently took place. The ISU programme is organised by the Institute of Trade Fair Management, University of Cologne, in cooperation with UFI, the Global Association of the Exhibition Industry.

How are challenges in the trade fair industry mastered in different countries? Which ideas are successful in today's globally competitive market? How to make a difference?

Based around this year's theme *The Global Trade Fair Industry – Challenges Now and Beyond*, participants discussed present and future developments in the trade fair industry and exchanged their ideas concerning recent challenges. The ISU traditionally dedicates each day to one specific topic. Esteemed academic speakers and trade fair executives gave lectures on this year's main topics: *Strategy, Logistics, Internationalisation, Marketing and Future Trends & Innovations*. Session leaders included Cliff Wallace, current President of UFI, the Global Association of the Exhibition Industry, Jochen Witt, Outgoing UFI President, Michael von Zitzewitz, Chairman of the Board of Management of Messe Frankfurt, Paul Woodward, Regional Manager of the UFI Asia/Pacific Office and Andrew Shanks, Development Director at Reed Exhibitions.

"We are happy so many of the leading exhibition companies participated this year. This shows us that the ISU's programme and expertise are professionally acknowledged around the world," says Professor Delfmann, member of the Board of Governors of the Institute of Trade Fair Management.

International discussion, networking and venue visit sparked information exchange

Case studies and workshops complemented the lectures and provided opportunities for participants to exchange their experience and knowledge with colleagues and experts. Outside the classroom, sessions provided time for valuable networking with fellow exhibition professionals. "Global interaction among participants is very important for us, as we are interested in how other countries are dealing with today's challenges in the trade fair business", explains ISU project manager Vera Kimmeskamp.

"Networking is of particular importance at the ISU. I made many new contacts and found it fascinating to learn how other trade fair managers are coping with the challenges of the exhibition industry," said Sales Manager Veli-Matti Korpinen of the Finnish exhibition company, Suomen Messut.

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Gerald Böse, Chairman of Koelnmesse's Executive Board, introduced venue to participants as they visited the local exhibition centre. This visit gave participants an opportunity to see the new Koelnmesse exhibition halls in operation as well. Ruba R. Tabbaa, Media and Marketing Manager at SOFEX JORDAN added. "For trade fair managers like us who are already pursuing professional careers, the ISU is a very useful event. I gained many ideas and insights throughout the five-day session. The programme exceeded all my expectations and I will recommend it highly."

The use of innovation in competition

ISU participants were the first to learn the results of a new survey on innovation in the trade fair industry. Based on in-depth expert interviews with CEOs and board members of the twelve biggest German exhibition companies, the survey focused on how companies position themselves for global competition and in which areas there is a need for action. Ground-breaking service concepts seem key to providing exhibition companies with a chance to set themselves apart from the competition. This stood out as the most decisive factor in developing and controlling innovation by means of structured processes. The survey, to be released in October 2008, was conducted by the Institute of Trade Fair Management, University of Cologne, in cooperation with Deloitte Consulting.

UFI's Rowena Arzt, Director of Business Development, positioned the ISU in a context of global education programmes by stating, "The ISU educational programme builds on academic and hands-on expertise to take participants to a new professional level. UFI is excited that our trade fair professionals recognize the importance of continuing education as a means to drive our industry forward."

The Institute of Trade Fair Management at the University of Cologne was jointly founded in August 1999 with Koelnmesse, supported by the foundation "Koelnmesse Stiftung". Since the summer semester 2000, participants have been taking part in lectures and practical seminars in topics including trade fair management, trade fair controlling, and strategies for trade fair companies in the age of globalisation. For additional information: www.tradefair.uni-koeln.de

UFI, the Global Association of the Exhibition Industry, promotes, serves and represents the trade fair industry worldwide. Via its member organisations, including the world's leading show organisers and fairground operators, national and international professional associations and industry partners, UFI is present in 84 countries on 6 continents. UFI members are responsible for the management and operation of over 4,500 exhibitions and 181 exhibition centres around the world. For additional information: [www. ufi.org](http://www.ufi.org)

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