

The Brand InfraTech

The biennial exhibition InfraTech gives a current and complete overview of soil, hydraulic and highway engineering in relation to the infrastructure sector. InfraTech has conquered a position of being **the** meeting place for the infrastructure in the Netherlands. This goes two ways:

1. The biennial exhibition in Ahoy Rotterdam went through a concept change that was supported by important market players.
2. Contact with the market is maintained in the intervening year by means of line extensions: InfraCampus and InfraTech Belgium.

AD 1: InfraTech in Ahoy Rotterdam

Target groups

Exhibitor target group: (Semi)government and organisations from the Netherlands with a focus on infrastructure: suppliers, public authorities, contractors, engineering firms, trade associations, knowledge institutes and media.

Visitor target group: Professionals working for businesses (of which sub contractors are an important group) or (semi)government in the soil, hydraulic and highway engineering, namely: infrastructure (above and under ground level), construction, mobility and environmental planning who want to enrich their knowledge and want to meet fellow professionals.

Changes in concept

The main changes in the concept of InfraTech in comparison to earlier editions are:

- **Public authorities have a central position on the exhibition floor.** This initiative triggers a chain reversal and ensures a more involved attitude from the public authorities. Due to the construction fraud, the relationship between principals and contractors was completely disturbed. Public authorities are the most important clients of infrastructural works and are important visitors of InfraTech. These principals were no longer willing to get in contact publicly with the suppliers in the market. Therefore, the concept has been adjusted in cooperation with these principals. Public authorities present themselves on the fair ground with a stand and they share their purchase portfolio in the *InfraTheatre*. This stimulates public authorities to attract their own employees to visit the exhibition. In this way, exhibitors are ensured to welcome the right visitors.
- **Themed sections on the exhibition floor.** The exhibition floor was divided into the following themes: Infrastructure, Water, Energy, Public Space, Traffic technology and Equipment. The central Plaza was called the Knowledge and Innovation Plaza. All themes had their own space on the exhibition floor so clients and suppliers could find each other easily.
- An extensive **knowledge programme** was incorporated in the exhibition. Public authorities presented their purchase portfolio in the *InfraTheatre*, labour market communication was central stage at the *Infra Career platform*, there was an *Infra Education square* and innovations were awarded the InfraTech Innovation Award.
- Three major market players in soil, hydraulic and highway engineering were attracted as strategic partners. These partners played a coordinating role in the knowledge programme and they combined their knowledge and network during InfraTech.

Goals

Marketing communication

- Reinforce market position: structural realisation of the meeting place for the infrastructure in cooperation with market parties;
- Encourage exhibitors to participate and visitors to visit;
- Image: top of mind for the target group as the meeting place for the infrastructure in the Netherlands.

Sales targets described beforehand

- Net commercial exhibition floor: 13,074 m² = 8.25% increase in comparison to 2007;
- 500 exhibitors = 18% increase in comparison to 2007. As a result of new themes, also new exhibitors;
- 19,000 visitors = 24% increase in comparison to 2007 (15,329). This number is based on preregistrations of 2007. In the morning of the traditionally most busy Thursday evening at the exhibition, a weather alarm was called by the Dutch government. Result was that we missed out on 3,000 estimated visitors in 2007;
- Customer satisfaction.

Results

The exhibition is now characterised by the involvement of public authorities (demand) and suppliers (supply). An unique change: from supply driven to a demand driven exhibition.

Positive appreciation of the new exhibition concept

The chain reversal that involved visitors intensively in InfraTech had a very good result. A record number of 535 exhibitors was achieved and also the number of visitors exceeded our expectations. No less than 19,175 professionals visited InfraTech. Net 14,050 m² of stand space was divided on a total of gross 30,000 m² exhibition floor. 63% of all visitors visited at least one public authority, 92% of them did not miss any themes or product groups. Important principals and contractors discussed investments and plans for the infrastructure in the *InfraTheatre*. Exhibitors appreciated the exhibition with an average grade of 7.4 and visitors with an average grade of 7.3.

Overall topic 'Climate for change'

Visitors were positively surprised by the innovations on the exhibition, the nice stands and the atmosphere. The expectations of 91% of the visitors were met or even exceeded. This also had its effect on the satisfaction of the exhibitors, 70% was (very) satisfied with the quality of the visitors.

Carrying out knowledge and network elements on the exhibition

The knowledge programme played an important role within the concept of InfraTech. An average of 53,9% visitors visited one or more parts of the programme. They appreciated the programme with an average grade of 7. By investing in the knowledge programme the decision making authority of the visitors increased from 69% in 2007 to 77% in 2009.

AD 2. Line extensions InfraTech

The concept InfraTech is reinforced by a number of spin-offs, to maintain contact with the market in the intervening period.

InfraCampus

InfraCampus was introduced as a new congress event on 14 January 2010 in Ahoy Rotterdam. *InfraCampus* responded to the needs of the sector of having a yearly platform for knowledge exchange and maintaining business relationships. *InfraCampus* is the place where young potentials as well as experienced professionals presented their vision on the future of infrastructure. This year's topic of the congress event was: 'The infrastructure for the Olympic Plan 2028'. Over 325 delegates were closely associated in the discussion with an interactive brainstorm, master classes, impressive speakers from the sports world and all top people from the infrastructural sector.

InfraTech Belgium

In Flanders expo Gent (Belgium), the second edition of InfraTech Belgium was organised in February 2010. The national exhibition for soil, hydraulic and highway engineering and the traffic industry was organised by Ahoy Rotterdam in cooperation with our Belgian partner Artexis. It offered a complete overview of the Belgian infra market. 112 exhibitors presented themselves to 2,845 visitors. For the Belgian market a knowledge programme with workshops was developed in cooperation with the Belgian public authorities, and important topics were discussed.