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Messe Düsseldorf closes the Covid-19 year 2020 with a turnover of EUR 119 million

Strategic package of measures initiated for 2021

2021 trade fair year kicks off with boot Düsseldorf in April

Lord Mayor Dr. Stephan Keller elected new Chairman of Supervisory Board

Despite the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, Messe Düsseldorf closes the business year 2020 with a still strong equity ratio of just under 55%. Thanks to sound and sustainable management over the past years, the company has created financial leeway which is having a positive effect for managing the current situation. Furthermore, the company counters the current pandemic with a powerful package of measures.

Düsseldorf, 15 December 2020. The Board of Managing Directors of Messe Düsseldorf has informed the Supervisory Board in its meeting today about business developments in 2020 as well as the forecast for 2021. The Messe Düsseldorf Group reports a turnover of EUR 131.5 million, which is 65.3% lower than in the previous year (EUR 378.5 million) due to the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic. The situation is similar for Messe Düsseldorf GmbH, which at EUR 118.9 million posts a 65.4% lower turnover than in 2019 (EUR 344 million). The GmbH profits have dropped to EUR -64.7 million (previous year: EUR 70.6 million). Despite this development Messe Düsseldorf GmbH continues enjoying a very high equity position at EUR 364.3 million (previous year: EUR 448 million). The equity ratio of 54.8 percent (previous year 64 percent) remains at a high level.

New Chairman of the Supervisory Board

In the Supervisory Board meeting, Dr. Stephan Keller, Lord Mayor of the state capital Düsseldorf, was elected new Chairman of the Supervisory Board. Dr. Stephan Keller: "As expected, the annual results ended up lower than in the previous year in view of Covid-19. It is therefore all the more relevant now that the shareholders continue to positively rate the continued important market position of Messe Düsseldorf as a partner for the industry as well as its financial stability: over the past years it has stood out with profitable and sustainable management, which will help coping with this difficult year."

Keller goes on to emphasise the importance of the trade fair as an economic driver for the location: "The numerous cancelled leading international trade fairs not only proved a tough setback for Messe Düsseldorf but especially for local business and all associated sectors of industry. Travel restrictions prevented exhibitors and visitors from travelling, which led to slumps in food service sales, in hospitality, in transport, in retail and in skilled crafts. This is another reason why we must do everything we can to overcome the Covid pandemic."

Board of Managing Directors initiates package of measures

As things currently stand, Messe Düsseldorf GmbH forecasts sales of EUR 107.3 million and a loss of EUR 77 million for the business year 2021. "Against the backdrop

of the negative effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on the exhibition industry we focus on long-term strategic measures in order to counter the current, Covid-19 induced decline in operations in a sustainable manner that secures the substance of the business,” stresses Wolfram N. Diener, President & CEO of Messe Düsseldorf.

The central aim is to secure liquidity, emphasizes Bernhard J. Stempfle, Managing Director Finance & Infrastructure. This is why short-time work will be extended to the end of March for the time being, new hires will be suspended and vacancies not be filled, fix-term contracts will expire and partial retirement schemes are being discussed. Furthermore, other planned budget lines as well as investment and maintenance will be cut back to an acceptable minimum. In 2020 investments stood at EUR 35.7 million (planned: EUR 70 million) and maintenance costs at EUR 10.2 million. 2021 will see investment total EUR 10.5 million and maintenance EUR 7.6 million.

Virtual formats to complement physical trade fairs

On top of this, Messe Düsseldorf expands its lines of business by strongly driving digital formats, for example. 20 to 22 October 2020 saw glasstec VIRTUAL being held as the first virtual-only event by Messe Düsseldorf, attracting 10,000 participants from more than 110 countries. Around 800 exhibitors from 44 countries presented themselves in the so-called Exhibition Space. Around 45,000 trade visitors from 169 nations took advantage of the offerings at virtual.MEDICA and virtual.COMPAMED from 16 to 19 November; in addition, 1,500 exhibitors from 63 countries were present. Wolfram N. Diener, CEO of Messe Düsseldorf, stresses: “Our virtual events attract a broad-based international audience. This is where industry players from all over the world can network, find out about industry trends and forge partnerships, even in times of Covid-19.” The virtual commitment of Messe Düsseldorf, he is confident, will also pay off after the pandemic: “There is a trend towards dovetailing physical and digital formats. For our trade fairs this means that they are increasingly complemented by virtual content. We bet on hybrid trade fairs – i.e. a mix of the physical event on site and digital ranges. This will consolidate the pole position of Düsseldorf’s global No. 1 trade fairs as central communication and information platforms for their respective industries – during the physical trade fairs and all year long.”

Trade fairs instrumental to re-starting the economy

Messe Düsseldorf has developed a comprehensive hygiene and infection protection concept based on the Corona Protection Ordinance of the state of North Rhine-Westphalia in order to make physical trade fairs possible. 4 to 13 September 2020 saw CARAVAN SALON Düsseldorf held with 107,000 visitors as the first major German trade fair after the lockdown in spring. Add to this the guest event “DoKomi” held by the subsidiary Düsseldorf Congress GmbH, which welcomed Europe’s biggest Anime and Japan Expo with 28,000 participants on 26 and 27 September 2020.

“We have thus shown that successful trade fairs are possible under the greatest possible protection for all participants, even in Covid times,” says Erhard Wienkamp, Managing Director Operative Trade Fair Business. “The events marked the re-start of the trade fair operations that the economy urgently needs. It needs platforms for presenting, gathering information, exchange and networking. In addition, there are numerous companies associated with the events,” explains Wienkamp. According to a study of the Munich based ifo Institute, the Düsseldorf trade fair and congress business alone induces EUR 2.98 billion of sales across Germany every year (in Düsseldorf: EUR 1.66 billion), secures 27,692 jobs (in Düsseldorf: 16,664) and generates additional tax revenue of EUR 567 million Euro (in Düsseldorf: EUR 36.3 million). One third of all overnight stays at hotels in Düsseldorf are accounted for by trade fairs and congresses.

Positive signals for international event business

In 2020 the home base Düsseldorf hosted seven trade fairs in total with 5,558 exhibitors und 534,914 visitors – spread across four Messe Düsseldorf events (boot,

EuroShop, CARAVAN SALON, TourNatur) and three partner and guest events (PSI, PromoTex Expo und viscom). Abroad, a total of 16 events were held, most of them in China (7). There, business has already picked up again: from July 2020 the subsidiary Messe Düsseldorf Shanghai successfully organised six trade fairs with more than 3,200 exhibitors and 160,000 trade visitors. The cycle was kicked off by the 100th China International Occupational Safety & Health Goods Expo (CIOSH) from 3 to 5 July 2020. It was one of China's first trade fairs, held with 1,035 exhibitors and 21,207 visitors, after the pandemic-induced standstill. This was followed by the retail trade fair C-star (134 exhibitors and 9,006 visitors), wire China and Tube China (953 exhibitors and 36,552 visitors), All in Print China (687 exhibitors and 70,000 visitors) as well as ProWine China (400 exhibitors and 22,542 visitors).

Outlook 2021: Planning certainty for customers

Messe Düsseldorf focuses on re-starting trade fair operations at its home base at the end of April 2021. Due to the recently increased number of Covid-19 infections, the continued difficult travel situation and various state and federal government decisions, according to which the holding of trade fairs continues to be prohibited for the time being, Messe Düsseldorf has called off the trade fairs tasc (19 – 20/02), interpack and components (25/02 – 03/03), Energy Storage Europe (16 – 18/03), EuroCIS (16 – 18/03), ProWein (19 – 23/03) and drupa (20 – 28/04). boot Düsseldorf (23 – 31/01) was postponed to 17 to 25 April 2021 while the other aforementioned trade fairs will be held again in line with their next planned editions. "With this move we give our customers and partners the biggest planning certainty possible for 2021 and reduce their economic losses to the best extent possible," says Wolfram N. Diener and adds: "We are well prepared and expect the general pandemic situation and travel possibilities to develop positively over the coming year."

Other Messe Düsseldorf events to follow in 2021 will be BEAUTY (28 – 30/05), TOP HAIR (29 – 30/05), glasstec (15 – 18/06), CARAVAN SALON (27/08 – 05/09), TourNatur (03 – 05/09), REHACARE (06 – 09/10), A+A (26 – 29/10), MEDICA and COMPAMED (15 – 18/11).

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The Messe Düsseldorf Group*

The Messe Düsseldorf Group generated sales amounting to EUR 131.5 million in the Covid-19 year 2020. At the seven events in Düsseldorf 5,558 exhibitors presented their products to 534,914 trade visitors in this trade fair year. Messe Düsseldorf has developed a groundbreaking Hygiene and Infection Protection Concept, which was successfully put to work at CARAVAN SALON as Germany's first major trade fair held since spring 2020. Düsseldorf exhibition centre hosts around 40 trade fairs in the five fields of expertise: "Machinery, Plants & Equipment", "Retail, Crafts & Services", "Medicine & Health", "Lifestyle & Beauty" as well as "Leisure", including 22 No. 1 trade fairs as well as, currently, 15 robust partner and guest events. Add to this over 1,000 conventions, corporate events, congresses and meetings held by its subsidiary Düsseldorf Congress. In addition to this, the Messe Düsseldorf Group organises 75 events, joint events and contracted events abroad and is one of the leading export platforms worldwide. The group of companies runs a global network with 77 foreign representations serving 141 countries – including 7 international subsidiaries.

*All figures are subject to final accounts.

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