

## Techttextil reports 23,300 trade visitors from 85 countries

Frankfurt am Main is the largest city in the German state of Hesse and the fifth-largest city in Germany, with a 2008 population of 670,000. The 13<sup>th</sup> Techttextil was a great success and, with record numbers of exhibitors and trade visitors. According to Detlef Braun, Member of the Board of Management of Messe Frankfurt, "Precisely because these are times of economic uncertainty, companies have been setting themselves new targets with innovative products and areas of application – and have in part already managed to achieve them at Techttextil. Some eight percent more exhibitors and two percent more trade visitors represent a double plus for Techttextil – a fantastic outcome." For the 1,201 exhibitors from 43 countries, Techttextil 2009 was an extremely business-intensive event, and they were full of praise for the high level of decision-making authority held by the 23,300 trade visitors. Thus, the 13th edition of the fair was able to increase the reputation of Techttextil as a hotbed of textile innovations for industry, research, medicine, environmental protection and many other areas of application.

### Praise for the large number of international visitors

Although industrial customers, in particular, have reduced their warehouse stock and are tending not to rebuild it, nonetheless exhibitors recorded substantial just-in-time purchases. Even in the engineering sector, the word was that, compared to the beginning of the year, the number of orders received had risen again slightly. In general, the technical textiles industry foresees a pale silver lining on the horizon for the second half of 2009 and is hoping for a slight upturn from 2010 onwards.

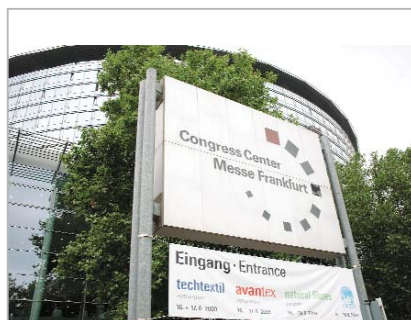
In addition to the high level of decision-making competence of the trade visitors, exhibitors praised above all the internationality of the visitors: with a 52 percent share of total visitor numbers, Techttextil has maintained the high level of internationality of previous events.

### 23,300 trade visitors from 85 countries

The exhibitors were particularly enthusiastic about the large number of international visitors from 85 different countries. The best-represented nations with an increase in visitor numbers were Italy, France, The Netherlands, Great Britain, Belgium, Switzerland, Spain, Turkey and Austria. The most important overseas visitor nations, such as the USA, India, Japan, South Korea, China and Taiwan, remained unchanged in terms of visitor numbers compared to the previous event. Germany was represented by 11,200 visitors, an increase of approximately 500 over 2007.

### Intensive business with international trade visitors

Numerous exhibitors praised the broad spectrum of trade visitors from all fields of the technical-textiles business and empha-



sized that the 13th Techttextil had exceeded their expectations by a significant margin.

In particular, the discussions were of a higher quality than at past events. Visitors also said they were very pleased with the range of products to be seen.

### Conference programme well received

Around 900 participants made their way to the Congress Centre Messe Frankfurt for the Techttextil and Avantex Symposiums, the International Natural Fibre Congress and the IWTO Congress to obtain a future-oriented preview of the

latest trends and developments in the worldwide sector.

The International Natural Fibres Congress was held during Techttextil to mark the UN Year of Natural Fibres. Brian Moir, Senior Economist Trade of the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) was delighted to see natural fibres being used in the technical and industrial field. Günther Beier, President of the International Wool Textile Organisation (IWTO), Belgium, said that thanks to the IWTO Congress it had been possible to draw the attention of users, e.g., the automobile industry, to important aspects, such as sustainability and ecology of natural raw materials.

The Techttextil and Avantex Symposiums presented a future-oriented over-view of trends and developments in the sector worldwide.

As part of the Techttextil Symposium, Professor Heinrich Planck of the Institute for Textile and Process Technology in Denkendorf chaired the Med-tech section 'New Textiles in Medicine'. Professor Planck is very happy with the response at



the symposium: "We had average audiences of up to 60 people at our lectures, which is significantly more than in previous years. In 2007, for example, the figure was around 25. This excellent result shows us that our topics addressed the interests and concerns of the target group at Techtexsil," explains Professor Planck.

Dr. Hartmut Strese, of VDI/VDE Innovation + Technik GmbH, Berlin, looks back to the Avantex symposium with an equal impression of success. Dr. Strese was responsible for chairing the lecture series on wearable technologies / e-textiles. "We were pleased to see a lot of interest at all nine lectures. The quality of the lectures was very high and the discussions following the formal sessions were very productive and informative", says Strese with some satisfaction.

The International Natural Fibres Congress was organized at Techtexsil specifically for the UN Year of Natural Fibres: "This congress is one of the most significant for technological development worldwide. The use of natural fibres in technological and industrial areas is extremely innovative and the presentation at Techtexsil here in Frankfurt is unique," said Brian Moir, Senior Economist Trade at the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations at the opening of the congress.

Of all those who took part in the conference, 270 also attended the IWTO congress. For Günther Beier, President of the International Wool Textile Organisation (IWTO), Belgium, "the IWTO congress was very well attended. Our association had an outstandingly good opportunity to present itself and its main themes: in particular our collaboration with Australian Wool Innovations has a major contribution to make to our ability, with natural fibres, to promulgate considerations of sustainability and ecology more forcefully and effectively throughout the sector – in the automobile industry for instance."

## 10<sup>th</sup> Student Competition

Jury member Prof. Werner Sobek, University of Stuttgart, Germany, presented the awards to the winners of the 10th Student Competition. He said, "The large number of entries from many countries and the high standard of the projects submitted confirm that the course taken is right and should be pursued without compromise. It is today's students who will work with textiles of tomorrow and design the textile buildings of the future." 10



projects were selected from over 90 entries. A brochure describing the award-winning projects in detail was published on the occasion of the 10th Student Competition, 'Textile Structures for New Building 2009'.

## The Techtexsil and Avantex Innovation Awards

The prize-winners come from Germany and Belgium. The winning projects for the young talents' award in the tenth student competition "Textile Structures for New Buildings", which come from Germany, Austria, Italy, Spain and India, delighted the visitors in Hall 4.1 with some original and unusual ideas for applications in interior and exterior architecture.

Jury member Dr. Jan Laperre, Centexbel, Belgium, presented the Techtexsil and Avantex Innovation Awards saying, "The award-winning projects we see here are creative and innovative. As long as we have developments such as these, we need have no worries about the future." The four Techtexsil Innovation



Awards for 2009 were given for projects in the New Materials, New Products and New Processes (2x) categories. The Avantex Innovation Awards were presented to entries in the New Products and Innovative Garments categories.

## Visitors enthusiastic about the Techtexsil fringe programme

Techtexsil gave international visitors a topical overview of trends and developments in the sector. With its numerous special shows, awards ceremonies and lecture forums, the fair offered a wide variety of information unparalleled by any other event. Trade visitors were very enthusiastic about the fringe programme and praised, in particular, the balanced choice of subjects. Special crowd puller included:

### Smart Textiles

The special show presented innovative technologies for textiles and garments in the Clothtech, Medtech, Protech and Sporttech product segments. The response from the visitor side was huge. The special show was organized by the SmartTextile Community, an association of companies from the textile pipeline, which aim to accelerate the market launch of new textile functions.

### Leichtbaukunst / Formfinder

The 'Formfinder' special show by Planungsbüro Leichtbaukunst in Hall 3.1 (stand J71) also proved to be highly popular. The stand concept communicated information and expertise in the form of a lecture and discussion forum aimed at architects, designers, engineers and companies who could discuss the use, materiality and planning of textile architecture on an interdisciplinary basis. The expert lectures offered focused on aspects and features of building with textiles.



## 'Design Plus'

A special highlight was the presentation of the Design Plus Awards on the occasion of the 4th Material Vision, which took place parallel to Techtexsil for the first time.

The Design Plus Award went to 36 products distinguished by the combination of innovative materials, successful design and intelligent functionality. This was the third time that Design Plus has been given at Material Vision. The award-winning entries came from Germany, Belgium, Denmark, France, Korea, Switzerland and the USA. Altogether, 160 entries from 15 countries were received.

## Comments

**Hans U. Kohn, COO, Schoeller Technologies**, reported a high level of interest: "We welcomed lots of Europeans and Americans to our stand. He added, "we are satisfied beyond our expectations with our presence at Techtexsil. We can be pleased with the great reception received

from all the trade visitors. In the past few days, we have had the chance to welcome a host of Europeans and Americans to our stand and we noticed that our discussions were of an even higher quality than at previous events."

**Michael Thiel, Marketing Manager, Pharetra**, saw the fair in a similar vein: "We were very busy from the first moment and made very many good new contacts. The 13th Techtexsil was the most successful for his company ever.

**Werner Zirnzak, Deputy General Manager of the Association of the Yarns, Woven Fabrics and Technical Textiles Industry (Industrieverband Garne - Gewebe - Technische Textilien e.V. - IVGT)**, underscored the high degree of satisfaction among exhibitors with regard to both visitor quality and quantity.

For **Petra Arnold, Marketing Manager of Karl Mayer** taking part in the fair represented a signal of strength to the market and a commitment to the construction of textile machinery in Germany. "In particular, an air of restrained confidence was exuded by European visitors to our stand –

and there were lots of them, too!" At last, the mechanical-engineering companies are noticing a slight but nevertheless positive change in the number of orders received.

Petra Arnold also confirmed, "customers were visiting our stand in a mood of quiet optimism and in large numbers, particularly European ones. For us, taking part in the fair was a conscious signal of the strength of our market and an avowal to the German textile machinery industry. The great thing is that our image/presence has also initiated some concrete post-fair business."

**Joop Pulles, Business Manager, Stahl Europe bv, the Netherlands**: "We did not attend the last two Techtexsil fairs but this year decided to renew our presence in Frankfurt am Main. The global economic crisis has hit sales very badly and so we have expanded our marketing activities and saw our presence here at the fair as a good way of gaining new customers and renewing our appeal to our existing loyal customer base. And our concept has paid off. Our expectations were already clearly exceeded on the first two days of the fair. We held some extremely interesting discussions, especially with European trade visitors, particularly those from Germany, Russia and Spain, as well as with visitors from Saudi Arabia."

**Maria Aleixo, Marketing Manager, Hänsel Textil**, said, "We had three very intensive days at their fair with numerous international visitors. What was particularly noticeable was the wide user spectrum of our trade visitors from the car and furniture industries to the construction industry. Ten years ago, Hänsel Textil, famous for 100 years for fabrics, wovens, knitwear and non-wovens for clothing, extended the scope of activities to the technical area. To achieve this, we bundled the know-how available within the Hänsel Group. These days the Group offers a unique product line in terms of functionality. At Techtexsil, we have opened the way to new growth areas outside our core customer business."

The next Techtexsil in Frankfurt am Main will take place from 24 to 26 May 2011. The leading international trade fair for technical textiles and nonwovens will then be accompanied for the first time by the new leading trade fair for textile and flexible materials processing, Texprocess (24 - 27 May 2011). The specialist event, Material Vision for materials in product development, design, and architecture which was held in parallel to Techtexsil for the first time this year, will again be held at the same time as Techtexsil. ♦

