

ACHEMA Economic Press Conference

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Check against delivery!

ACHEMA 2012 – The industry's optimism is tangible

- Good acceptance of revamped exhibition structure
- Current key figures top those of previous event
- Innovative new event formats
- Trend indicator positive

Two months and two days ... the countdown to ACHEMA has started! When the halls open on 18 June, ACHEMA will have a new look in many respects, whilst retaining its character and ideals: the world's flagship event for the process industry is set to showcase a complete cross-section of process engineering under one roof, attracting the Who's Who of the branch to Frankfurt. The spectrum of our target groups reflects this diversity accordingly, ranging from the chemical industry to the pharmaceutical branch, to the food industry, agriculture and biotechnology through to the energy sector and materials technology.

What is new at ACHEMA 2012? What does the 30th ACHEMA hold in store for us? And what forecasts seem realistic?

More international than ever before

One thing is certain: with a proportion of around 50 % of exhibitors from abroad, ACHEMA 2012 will be even more international than all of its predecessors. This is proof positive of the internationalisation of our branch – at the same time it is proof positive of the undiminished importance of Germany as a trade fair location. No other country has such a concentration of leading fairs with a worldwide impact on its fair grounds as Germany. Despite the emergence of new gravitational centres for our branch in Southeast Asia, the Near East and also in Latin America, as the organiser of ACHEMA we take pride in the fact that we have not only maintained, but indeed reinforced the strategic importance of ACHEMA as the flagship event for the process industry.

Focus themes on the pulse of the times

With this year's focus theme 'Innovative Energy Carriers and Storage' we have certainly struck the nerve of the times – if the resounding response is anything to go by. Together with the perennial favourite 'Energy Efficiency' and the previous special theme 'Renewable Resources' this opens up tremendous business opportunities for the process industry which integrates the interdisciplinary know-how for innovations in these fields.

The event 'BiobasedWorld at ACHEMA' incorporates another core theme of ACHEMA and is represented by more than 700 exhibitors. This theme stands for the technologies, products and services covering the whole gamut of the biobased value chain, i.e. biomass, biobased chemicals, fuels and products.

How do we rate the development in the different exhibition groups? And how does the present unsettled economic situation worldwide affect the different exhibition groups?

Growth in process automation and pharmaceutical technology

Of all the ACHEMA exhibition groups, two particularly stand out: 'Instrumentation, Control and Automation Techniques' and 'Pharmaceutical, Packaging and Storage Techniques' have achieved impressive growth rates. Due to the restructuring of the hall allocation necessitated by the new Hall 11, we were able to offer both these exhibition groups more scope for expansion, and it came as no surprise that it was promptly snapped up. Demand in the two largest exhibition groups, 'Pumps, Compressors, Valves and Fittings' and 'Laboratory and Analytical Techniques', also remains gratifyingly stable. The record total of 996 exhibitors makes the former group the largest pump exhibition in the world, and the latter still equals its previous level despite the fact that ACHEMA again coincides with Analytica in Munich. Demand in other core sectors of ACHEMA, such as Engineering, Thermal Processes and Mechanical Processes, is also on an even keel. All in all, ACHEMA is already almost fully booked!

Strong participation from Southeast Asian countries

A comparison of the different countries by exhibitors reveals that China and India are once again recording double-digit growth rates, each country having a contingent of well over 100 exhibitors. Moreover there is also a keen demand from countries like South Korea, Taiwan, Turkey and our eastern neighbours, Poland and the Czech Republic. Participation on the part of our western EU neighbours has maintained a constantly high level for years. Only Switzerland is having a hard struggle as an exporting nation due to the strong Swiss franc, which also has implications for ACHEMA.

On the visitor side, given the numerous inquiries received from visitor groups from all four corners of the earth over the past few weeks and months, we have good reason to conclude that ACHEMA will be no less internationally positioned. And, as such is the case, I dare to predict that the visitor figures may well turn out to be slightly higher than those for the last ACHEMA.

Innovative forms of networking

This may be partly attributed to the fact that, at this ACHEMA, we are offering a new range of innovative event formats geared to catalysing an exchange of ideas and information between visitors and exhibitors and among the participants as a whole. First and foremost of them is our Partnering Platform, the first-ever tool for identifying the corresponding interests of the participants who are then brought together in a type of matchmaking process. Further attractions are the event series, such as the Technology Transfer Days, featuring mini-presentations of close-to-market solutions, and the Venture Capital Day which functions as a knowledge-sharing marketplace for potential investors. Our 'European Conference on the Bioeconomy' will highlight the biotech scene from a cross-functional perspective that is political rather than technological in nature, the main focus being on a socio-political framework for the biotech sector.

900 lectures, stimulating guest events

Besides the traditional core theme of China, this time our well-established ACHEMAworldwide Business Forum focuses on Azerbaijan, a country that is arguably a relative newcomer to the established chemical producing nations. This is likely to make it extremely interesting to a number of our exhibitors. The event series cluster around our traditional Congress programme featuring 900 lectures packed into every available time and space slot in the tight Congress schedule. The Congress is supplemented by numerous prestigious guest events, such as the expert round table 'Automation Dialog', jointly hosted by NAMUR, ZVEI and ARC and the 'International Powder and Nanotechnology Forum' organised by our Japanese colleagues, to name but two.

Features/Attractions across the generations

Once again we offer a special attraction for our younger colleagues, the jobvector career day, focusing on the first steps on the career ladder. Thanks to the large number of exhibiting companies and institutions from the most diverse fields, ACHEMA also opens up opportunities for professional development and career changes. And last, but not least, the ACHEMA Study Courses, the programme for pupils, students and teachers, offering our clients and participants of tomorrow a chance to familiarise themselves with process engineering at first hand today.

To sum it up, ACHEMA unites the multi-faceted variety that the world of process engineering will seek in vain elsewhere. Admittedly, our electronic and other media may give it greater transparency – but there is no comparison to experiencing it on the spot!

Thank you for your attention!