

Press

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Record results for Messe Frankfurt in 2008

New all-time highs in sales, earnings, net income and exhibitor count

Positive consolidated earnings expected for 2009

2008 was the most successful financial year in the history of the Messe Frankfurt Group. The company set a new sales record of €440 million, with foreign sales passing the €100 million mark for the first time ever (€104 million). "2008 is the ninth year in a row in which Messe Frankfurt has increased its sales", said Michael von Zitzewitz, Chairman of the Board of Management of Messe Frankfurt, at the Group's Annual Results Press Conference in Frankfurt earlier today. "That is a unique achievement in the cyclical exhibition sector worldwide."

With pre-tax earnings of approx. €52 million, the company succeeded in raising the bar once again. Consolidated annual net income is around €36 million, also an all-time high. Return on sales after tax is 8.2 percent, while EBITDA (earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortisation) exceeds the €100 million mark with €101.8 million.

"Since 1998, Messe Frankfurt has generated pre-tax earnings of €428 million and more than €250 million in earnings after taxes. These figures illustrate the company's unique position in its competitive environment", said Michael von Zitzewitz.

Strong performance of events with a new exhibitor record

In 2008, the Messe Frankfurt Group organised a total of 102 trade fairs and exhibitions worldwide. With just under 69,000 exhibitors, more companies chose to exhibit at Messe Frankfurt events than ever before in the history of the Group. In addition, a total of 397 congresses, events and other activities were conducted at the company's Frankfurt base with some 391,000 visitors. In the reporting year, some three million visitors attended events organised by Messe Frankfurt.

The 42 domestic trade fairs played host to around 43,700 exhibitors. Some 1.42 million square metres of net exhibition space were booked for these fairs, which were attended by around 1.7 million visitors. 36 trade fairs took place in Frankfurt, of which 17 were organised by the Messe Frankfurt Group itself, attracting around 24,000 exhibitors and 900,000 visitors. Some one million square metres of exhibition space were booked.

Around 70 percent of exhibitors at the Group's own events in Germany came from abroad, while international guests accounted for over 46 percent of the visitor count. This is the highest level of international participation ever recorded in the history of Messe Frankfurt and also in the competitive environment. By way of comparison, the average international component for trade fairs in Germany is estimated by AUMA (Association of the German Trade Fair Industry) as being 53 percent among exhibitors and 25 percent among visitors.

The 19 guest events attracted some 17,000 exhibitors and 680,000 visitors. Approximately 305,000 square metres of net exhibition space were booked.

Business abroad continues steady growth

Almost every second exhibitor at the Group's own events now also participates in one of the 60 events held outside Germany. "This shows us very clearly how important a high international profile is in our key markets", emphasised Michael von Zitzewitz: "We in Frankfurt benefit twofold from this, as many exhibitors abroad also come to the Frankfurt events sooner or later."

The main region for foreign business continues to be Asia, which accounts for 31 events. Nine new trade fairs were launched in 2008, including e.g. Intersec China. The total visitor count for all events outside Germany was over 884,000. As well as this, Messe Frankfurt organised 17 German Pavilions on behalf of the Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology (BMWi).

Building on our international top position with strong trade fair brands

In spite of the difficult economic climate, Messe Frankfurt aims to continue its organic investment while focusing even more on its core areas of expertise. "Over the past years, we have built up a solid cushion that will now stand us in good stead", said Michael von Zitzewitz. "We can and will invest counter-cyclically – so that we will have an even better market position after the crisis."

In the past few weeks alone, three trade fairs were secured for Frankfurt. Remax, the largest European trade fair for the recycling of printer materials and accessories, is to take place alongside Paperworld as of 2010. Texprocess, which features machines for processing textiles and other flexible materials, will open its doors for the first time in May 2011. The Group's contract with the Frankfurt Book Fair was also extended until 2022.

Further afield, two new offshoots of high-calibre Frankfurt trade fair brands – Automechanika South Africa and Ambiente Italia – were launched successfully. A further new event, Texcare Forum Russia, is scheduled to take place in September.

“These successes notwithstanding, the current financial year requires a great deal of stamina from us all”, said Michael von Zitzewitz. Nonetheless, Messe Frankfurt expects to generate a positive result for the year as a whole.

Background information on Messe Frankfurt

Messe Frankfurt is Germany’s leading trade fair organiser, with 440 million euros in sales in 2008 and more than 1,500 employees worldwide. The Messe Frankfurt Group has a global network of 29 subsidiaries, five branch offices and 52 international Sales Partners, giving it a presence for its customers in more than 150 countries. Events “made by Messe Frankfurt” take place at more than 30 locations around the globe. In 2008, Messe Frankfurt organised more than 100 trade fairs, of which more than half took place outside Germany.

Comprising an area of 578,000 square metres, Messe Frankfurt’s exhibition grounds are currently home to nine exhibition halls and an adjacent Congress Center. The company is publicly owned, with the City of Frankfurt holding 60 percent and the State of Hesse 40 percent.

For more information, please visit our website at: www.messefrankfurt.com