

# PRESS RELEASE

Oldenburg, 06.03.2023



## Increased attendance at the IAW a good sign for the coming season

- **Visitor numbers at the Spring Fair increased to more than 6000 traders**
- **Healthy number of exhibitors: 50 newcomers showcased promising new products**
- **Organizers declare: „Everyone could sense the new optimism shared across the trade.“**

Attendance at the 34th International Trade Fair for Retail Promotions and Imports (IAW) almost reached the visitor numbers achieved before the pandemic. The IAW Project Director Kerstin Manke was understandably delighted: „The reticence we experienced during the Covid pandemic is demonstrably a thing of the past. Everyone was relieved to see an end to the Covid restrictions and there is new optimism about business prospects.“ There were positive signs even before the trade fair gates opened. With 280 exhibitors from 22 countries registered (an increase of 12% compared to the Autumn Fair), the entire IAW display area was completely booked. The international character of the IAW was also confirmed. In fact, it was clearly enhanced – with buyers from 80 foreign countries accounting for 48 % of all trade visitors.

Such a good response is not surprising in view of the IAW's leading status as an international hot spot for orders of promotional, seasonal and trend-led merchandise as well as mass-selling products, together with its reputation for retail innovations and fresh ideas. Trade fair organizer Ulrich Zimmermann concluded: „Our promise to showcase the future of retailing hit the nail on the head and reflected the generally positive mood.“ This growth in confidence was reflected in the excellent sales achieved at the event. For at least 50 exhibitors this was their first IAW and their involvement played a significant part in delivering what the trade needs for a successful spring season.

### Feeling good about the future: new shared optimism

The mood at the IAW was one of quiet optimism. This was confirmed by Katja Filippenko, who makes confetti containing plant seeds: „A company that offers confetti obviously has to make an appearance at a city famous for its carnival. For us, the many contacts we were able to make here from diverse sectors was a real bonus and the event offered a great platform for showcasing our latest product.“

Johannes Erzgräber from NICO Europe GmbH was similarly impressed. His company produces plastic-free fireworks: „There has been another jump in demand for fireworks and the IAW proved the perfect platform for presenting them to the specialist trade. We have been exhibiting here from the start. This trade fair is great for acquiring new customers.“

Claudia Price of Ryder Imports Ltd. from England also thought the trade fair had got it right with its focus on sustainability in the retail promotions segment. Her yoga products made of cork were enthusiastically received by the buyers. These are just three companies exemplifying sustainability at the IAW from a wide spectrum that featured many fair-trade products made of recycled or sustainable raw materials using organic and environment-friendly manufacturing processes. The concept of the IAW as a European fair means that goods are moved over shorter distances, thus reducing fuel consumption and delivery times. Shorter, faster routes allow for greater sustainability.

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Regular visitors were not surprised, but for those attending the IAW for the first time the product diversity was a revelation: Retailers looking for top sellers or quick-selling merchandise were not disappointed. The IAW boasts everything: DIY products, fashionwear, home accessories, garden and leisure products, electrical and electronic goods, seasonal products and trend-setters. Novel snack products and trendy drinks that could be sampled by visitors rounded off the enormous range and proved very popular.

The IAW again took place parallel to Asia-Pacific Sourcing. As in previous years, holding these two fairs together at the same time and the same location produced important positive spin-off effects. Trade visitors to the IAW benefitted from the array of Asian products for home and garden which further extended the diverse range of products shown at the Cologne exhibition centre. There is no doubt that this successful double act attracted additional customers to Cologne.

## **Congress program offered valuable business advice**

The free congress program offered good ideas and tips on how exhibitors and trade visitors alike could grow their business. At the zentrada Forum trade experts provided insights into profitable new business opportunities. Participants in the E-Commerce Arena, a joint project of IAW and Restposten.de, gained a wealth of useful information on various aspects of online trade. The adjacent e-commerce quarter, which brings system and service providers for online business together, was only one of many opportunities for effective networking at this year's IAW Spring Fair.

„E-commerce solutions that provide real added value are becoming an increasingly important competitive factor and promotional products are no exception“, explains Reza Daie from Visual Conversion, a company that specializes in online product presentations. He added: „The buyers visiting the IAW know this too, which is why there was such keen interest in our solutions.“

„Sending out a positive message is all the more important when times are hard,“ says Ulrich Zimmermann. „And we could fulfil this mission at the 34th IAW with a program packed with variety, information and interesting topics.“

The dates for the next IAW Autumn Fair have already been announced: the 35th International Trade Fair for Retail Promotions and Imports will take place from 5th - 7th September 2023 in Halls 6 and 9. The latest information on the event can be found at [www.iaw-messe.de](http://www.iaw-messe.de).

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