

PRESS RELEASE

Hatten, 11.09.2026

Stability in a challenging market environment: the 41st IAW trade fair closes on a positive note

From toys to decorations, from live shopping to retail, and from clearance items to promotional goods: at the 41st International Trade Fair for Retail Promotions and Imports (IAW) in Cologne, 260 exhibitors—including 26 first-time exhibitors—presented a diverse range of products and new retail trends. Around 5,000 trade visitors from more than 65 countries were able to close lucrative deals and expand their expertise at the fair. Even in a challenging market environment, the IAW continues to stand out as a bridge-building force in international trade.

Project Manager Kerstin Manke draws a positive conclusion: "The 41st IAW fair sent an important message to the retail world: even amid challenging global and economic conditions, face-to-face interaction at the IAW provides confidence and helps companies to position themselves for the future."

The IAW trade show revolves around the widely diversified product ranges of its exhibitors, who expressed their satisfaction in spite of the price-conscious consumer sentiment on the market: "We're always very happy with the organisation of the fair and the quality of its visitors. It's always a positive experience for our company because we connect with great new customers," says Samuel Ben Béhé, CEO of Fornord Import Distribution. Zaid Kaisi, Sales Manager of SaSa Trading, is also pleased: "We were completely swamped by customers. We didn't think we'd be able to make sales so quickly, but many of our products are already sold out. We've acquired lots of new customers and have had the chance to really make ourselves known. Everyone comes together in one place here, which means that the IAW is a great place to make contacts."

Ulrich Zimmermann, Managing Director of Nordwestdeutsche Messegesellschaft Bremen-Hannover mbH, confirms that the IAW trade show is committed to precisely this mission: "Since its very first edition, the IAW has aimed to support retailers in finding solutions to the very issues facing the industry. With attractive exhibitors and an exciting supporting programme, we've succeeded in creating an environment that fosters forward thinking and helps to address the challenges facing the retail sector."

The U.S. live-shopping platform whatnot showcased new retail methods at its booth. "whatnot combines entertainment and shopping. In this interactive format, purchasers can find great deals and a vast product selection, all while enjoying the human touch," explains Marketing Manager Leon Niemeyer. These are precisely the strengths that have always defined the IAW: a friendly atmosphere, international connections and innovations from the world of retail.

First-time exhibitors at the 41st IAW were also quick to take advantage of this opportunity. Obsession AG deals in home textiles and came to the IAW with the goal of making new contacts. "It's going amazingly well—we're really satisfied and can't stop smiling," reports Meg Yousofi, Head of Sales at Obsession. "We've met customers we hadn't been able to reach before." Uwe Holzvoigt also views the 41st IAW in a similarly positive light. With his



**Nordwestdeutsche Messegesellschaft
Bremen-Hannover mbH**
Heidplackenweg 9
26209 Hatten, GERMANY

www.iaw-messe.de

Contact person for Press
Kerstin Manke (Project Management)
+49 (0) 57 21 / 9 93 08 98
manke@iaw-messe.de

Kira Riege (Marketing/ Media/ Graphic)
+49 (0) 441 / 92 070 576
riege@iaw-messe.de

Trade fair photos (300 dpi)
www.iaw-messe.de/en/press/

PRESS RELEASE

Hatten, 11.09.2026

company Anytrade he acts as a distributor for the HAVIT brand. Holzvoigt highlights the very international audience, featuring a diverse range of buyers and productive discussions.

At the IAW customers can order a wide variety of products on the spot and at competitive prices, which is exactly why Muhammad Suleiman is attending the trade show for the second time: "At the IAW you'll find a highly varied range of products—you can buy just about anything there." With his company IPEKYOL he is currently building up a base in the beauty products sector. Caroline Schömel, who is visiting the IAW for the first time as Sales & Partner Manager at Vergleichshai GmbH, highlights the same product selection. "There are many companies from all over Europe and worldwide, which is exactly what the trade show is all about for us. You'll find a variety of products here that you won't find anywhere else."

Trade visitors simultaneously received new inspiration for online retail, with 34 speakers sharing practical insights and expertise with their audience in the E-Commerce Arena. The programme there covered all the topics currently shaping e-commerce: compliance, content and product images were featured alongside AI workflows, Amazon and the latest developments in social commerce. Michael Frontzek is the founder of the Amazon agency mi-commerce and the organiser of the E-Commerce Arena. He sees the additional value it provides primarily in the diversity of topics: "So far, we've received nothing but positive feedback from audiences and speakers. Visitors receive a great deal of free input here," commented Frontzek on the last day of the trade show. Thanks to the insights gained from the presentations and discussions with exhibitors in the E-Commerce Quarter, which brings together leading players in online retail around the Arena, visitors gain the know-how they need for the successful online marketing of the products they purchase at the IAW. For the next edition of the E-Commerce Arena, Frontzek is planning to place even greater emphasis on TikTok and social commerce: "Social commerce is currently the fastest-growing sector, and live shopping is also becoming increasingly relevant," says the e-commerce expert.

With the very latest product lines, valuable industry expertise and a productive atmosphere for business discussions, the IAW has once again used its 41st edition to confirm its status as a key platform in international trade. The next IAW trade show will be held from 9 to 11 March 2027 in Halls 6 and 9 of koelnmesse, Cologne exhibition grounds, taking place concurrently with Asia-Pacific Sourcing.



**Nordwestdeutsche Messegesellschaft
Bremen-Hannover mbH**
Heidplackenweg 9
26209 Hatten, GERMANY

www.iaw-messe.de

Contact person for Press
Kerstin Manke (Project Management)
+49 (0) 57 21 / 9 93 08 98
manke@iaw-messe.de

Kira Riege (Marketing/ Media/ Graphic)
+49 (0) 441 / 92 070 576
riege@iaw-messe.de

Trade fair photos (300 dpi)
www.iaw-messe.de/en/press/