

“We and the whole of Cologne are looking forward to IDS”

Interview with Gerald Böse, CEO of Koelnmesse.
By Dental Tribune International

■ IDS 2019 is expected to be even bigger and more international than the previous event in 2017. As the dental world prepares to travel to the city of Cologne for the 12-16 March event, Gerald Böse, CEO of Koelnmesse, says new developments will provide an even better trade fair experience.

The year 2017 was a record-breaker for Koelnmesse, With more than 43,000 exhibitors and over 2.1 million visitors hosted at the company's trade fairs worldwide. What role did IDS play in this success?

Yes, that's right, regarding trade fairs, 2017 was a totally successful year, in which we not only reached our ambitious growth targets, but actually even surpassed them. In 2017, we ultimately recorded a turnover of €357.9 million, hosted 43,000 exhibiting companies from 119 countries, and received over 2.1 million visitors from 218 countries at our 82 trade fairs and exhibitions. As the industry's leading international dentistry trade fair, IDS plays a very important role in our trade fair portfolio.

With an increase of 12 per cent on 2015, IDS 2017 received more than 155,000 trade visitors. What are you expecting in terms of visitors for the approaching 38th edition of the show?

The developments seen over the last several years and the responses to our visitor surveys indicate that we can expect a high increase in the number of visitors once again in 2019. We are optimistic that we will once again be able to top the result of over 155,000 international trade visitors in 2019.

Have there been any changes to the halls, facilities or services that you'd like to share with our readers?

With the integration of Hall 5, IDS has significantly expanded its floor space again. The event will now span a total exhibition space of over 170,000 m². The integration of Hall 5 creates the necessary capacity for the high exhibitor and visitor demand. Here, among others, several large suppliers of consumer prophylaxis pro-

ducts will be exhibiting. Hall 5 fits in well with the natural flow of the trade fair and is perfectly connected to the boulevard entrance between Hall 5 and 10. The boulevard entrance will be in use, as will the south, east and west entrances. In addition, the integration of Hall 5 will further enhance the overall quality of stay for visitors to IDS: a food court can be found in Hall 5.1, while the wide aisles and light-flooded passages will provide even better navigation and layout. Furthermore, the smooth, visitor-friendly access guarantees a more even distribution of visitors across all of the exhibition halls.

IDS 2019 is offering a further service that facilitates travel to IDS for trade visitors and, what's more, makes it less expensive for them. For the coming event, the IDS e-ticket includes a free transport ticket that allows holders to use public transport in the region of Cologne—for the very first time, holders can also travel throughout the entire Rhein-Ruhr metropolitan region. That means that trade visitors travelling from the metropolitan area of Düsseldorf, Duisburg, Essen, Gelsenkirchen, Mülheim and Dortmund who have booked accommodation there or who are flying into Düsseldorf can travel to the trade fair in Cologne using regional express trains and other local transport options free of charge.

Visitors will appreciate that. Koelnmesse recently reported a significant increase in international IDS exhibitor numbers. What can you tell us about this trend?

Over the expanded exhibition space, we are again expecting around 2,300 exhibitors from more than 60 countries, who will again be presenting the current trends of the dental industry. Of these, over 300 companies, all of which satisfy the demanding IDS participation criteria, will be taking part in the Cologne event for the first time. We—the VDDI/GFDI [Association of the German Dental Industry and Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Dental-Industrie] and Koelnmesse—place great value on the careful and healthy growth of IDS. The quality of the exhibitors and visi-



▲ Gerald Böse, CEO of Koelnmesse.

tors, as well as the amount and topicality of innovations on display, make IDS the most comprehensive showcase and the liveliest and most significant marketplace of the dental world.

IDS 2017 had a focus on digital production and diagnosis methods. Will we see another strong digital focus this year, and what other aspects of dentistry do you expect to come to the fore?

Improved digital workflows and additive manufacturing are at the fore of international development being seen in dentistry. Digitalisation is advancing at a dynamic pace. As such, innovation cycles are becoming increasingly shorter. The innovative power of the industry becomes particularly clear here, and digitalisation is extending across all segments of the dental world.

In relation to the current trade fair market environment, what can IDS exhibitors expect, in terms of buyers and decision makers walking the halls?

Over 155,000 visitors from 157 countries, with 60 per cent of visitors from abroad—the figures from the last event clearly demonstrate where the strengths and KPIs [key performance indicators] of IDS lie: in the quality of the participants, on both the visitor and exhibitor front. IDS in Cologne is the global industry platform; this is where the dental world meets up. This status is synonymous with an exceptionally strong presence of international decision makers.

What are the long-term prospects of IDS, and what is necessary to keep building on a successful event?

The development and success of IDS over the past several years permits us to look positively ahead to the future. However, nobody can afford to stand still in our industry. That is why shortly after IDS 2019 we will get together with the GFDI, the commercial enterprise of the VDDI, the organiser of IDS, and jointly work out how we have to

align ourselves in order to ensure that we can continue this success on a sustainable basis.

Lastly, IDS 2017 saw Cologne called the five-day global capital of dentistry. With the dental world now about to arrive in the city, how would you describe what the host city has to offer?

Even though business is the focus at IDS, visitors and exhibitors will no doubt explore and enjoy the cathedral city. The heart of the metropolis, with over a million inhabitants, lies in close vicinity to the fairgrounds, separated only by the Rhine—the lifeline of the people from Cologne—with its liberal, friendly and cosmopolitan citizens. In addition to the cultural sights, which span the city's long history of Roman settlement all the way to the present day, the Cologne lifestyle can best be experienced in the many restaurants, breweries and pubs. We and the whole of Cologne are looking forward to IDS. ◀



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