

Strong exhibitor lineup shaping up for LIGNA 2019

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The next LIGNA is being staged from 27 to 31 May 2019, and its organizers, Deutsche Messe and the German Woodworking Machinery Manufacturers' Association (VDMA Holzbearbeitungsmaschinen), have announced that exhibitor registrations are coming in at a very pleasing pace. While opening day is still about a year away, exhibition space at the world's leading trade fair for machinery, plant and tools for the woodworking and timber processing industry is already more than 80 percent booked. To put that in perspective: LIGNA 2017 featured 1,520 exhibitors and occupied 130,000 square meters (1,400,000 sq. ft.) of display space.

"I'm pleased to say we're getting lots of first-time exhibitors, not to mention plenty of repeat exhibitors, many of whom are staging bigger displays this time around," commented Christian Pfeiffer, Deutsche Messe's Global Director LIGNA& Woodworking Events. "What's more, the outstanding response exhibitors are showing for the event serves as confirmation that we made the right move in 2017, at which time when we completely revamped the site, the layout of display categories and thus the locations of virtually every single exhibitor," he added. "Next year, the majority of the exhibitors will be retaining the locations they had in 2017 following the big change. The Surface Technology display launched in 2017 will be home to a number of first-time exhibitors in 2019. Companies from around the world are so eager to exhibit at LIGNA because they know it is the very best option when it comes to showcasing new products, presenting full-fledged plant and machinery in action, as well as for networking and comparing notes with industry peers."

One of the regular LIGNA features is the Wood Industry Summit. Just looking at the summit's three focus themes – "Integrated Woodworking – Customized Solutions", "Smart Surface Technologies" und "Access to Resources and Technology" – it is clear that the upcoming show will be strong on high-tech highlights and innovations. From various angles, each of the show's display categories will explore digitization as the engine and driving force of innovation in the wood industry. Pfeiffer: "Timber processing and woodworking are no longer just about standalone machines. Instead, what we have now are digitally integrated processes and systems built around machines. LIGNA 2019 will thus traverse a wealth of real-life applications, with a strong focus on machine demonstrations and the innovative power of digitization and automation."

Highly integrated, interconnected industrial processes pose a number of new challenges. These, too, will be explored at LIGNA, because taking digitization seriously and spotting its opportunities are vital to recognizing and adopting new business models. The show will have a strong focus on the role of automation and digitization in combining the customer-centricity of product individualization with the economies of scale of large-series production. As well as enabling cost-effective batch-size-one production, these smart woodworking and timber processing technologies are yielding gains in energy and resource efficiency.

There is a great deal of interest in these technologies at the moment, with the business climate looking very positive and the German Woodworking Machinery Manufacturers' Association reporting healthy order books for 2018. The USA and China – the two most important export markets for high-tech woodworking machinery – are forecast to grow 8 percent this year. Apart from digitization, the main drivers of this boom for wood-industry technology suppliers are the worldwide megatrends of sustainable building and urbanization.

In terms of attendance, the organizers are predicting a strong turnout, particularly from Germany, Poland and China – countries which in 2017 ranked among the show's Top Five visiting nations.

Source: Deutsche Messe AG; brokjans PR