

8 October 2009

End-of-show report for BIOTECHNICA 2009

Strong showing in face of tough economic climate

- Growing acceptance and weight of biotechnology in industry
- Substantial growth in number of exhibitors and trade visitors as well as display space sold
- Excellent response to conference themes of bioinformatics, protein engineering, regenerative medicine and bio-based economy

Hannover, Germany. Chalking up an increase in the number of exhibitors and trade visitors plus the amount of display space sold, the BIOTECHNICA, exhibition (6 to 8 October 2009) sent some important signals in the midst of an economic crisis. "We have staged a strong exhibition in spite of the tough economic period", stated Stephan Ph. Kühne, Member of the Deutsche Messe Management Board, at the close of the tradeshow — Europe's biggest in the biotechnology and life sciences sector. "Increases of more than 21 percent in exhibitor numbers and 35 percent in terms of the amount of display space sold, and over 11,000 trade visitors from 40 different countries substantially exceeded our expectations", Kühne said, adding: "The importance of biotechnology is now firmly anchored in people's minds."

650 exhibitors from 28 nations were on hand to present the latest biotechnology products and applications for the health care, food production, industrial and environmental protection sectors, over a total net display area of 11,214 square meters. "BIOTECHNICA has confirmed its position as a European marketplace for unveiling innovations, doing business and forging new contacts. At a time when many companies are preoccupied with overcoming short-term obstacles, the industry has used this event to acquire a sustainable new focus", Kühne concluded.

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Around one-third of all exhibitors were from abroad, most of them coming from France, Switzerland, the United States and the United Kingdom. This year's event saw a record participation from the Netherlands in terms of display space and the number of exhibitors, while Korea was the leading exhibitor country from the Asia-Pacific region.

Domestically, the highest number of exhibitors came from the German states of Baden-Württemberg and North Rhine-Westphalia, followed by Lower Saxony and Bavaria. Even Germany's newest biotechnology company — Enzymical, based in Thüringen, established on 16 September 2009 — turned up to showcase its products at BIOTECHNICA. Exhibitors said their main reason for coming to the show was to generate new leads among potential business partners and touch base with existing customers. Biotechnologiezentrum Luckenwalde, for example, was able to find three investors from the United States and Korea.

International trade audience

BIOTECHNICA featured a highly international trade audience, with the proportion of foreign visitors up by more than 25 percent. There were also more visitors from other European countries this year. A significant increase in attendance from North America was a gratifying development, and the proportion of Asian visitors was up a substantial 25 percent on the previous event. Leading countries in terms of visitor attendance included the United Kingdom, Austria, the Netherlands, Switzerland and the United States.

Specialists from R&D and science sector represented the most sizable attendee group, accounting for 5,500 trade visitors. Attendance from the information and communications technology sector almost quadrupled compared with the 2008 event. The main visitor motivation for attending consisted of finding out about the latest innovations on the one hand, and surveying the general market on the other. In terms of exhibition segments, visitor attention was primarily focused on biotechnology and pharmaceuticals/medicine. There was also a strong interest in laboratory equipment and chemistry applications.

Numerous conference premieres

Over 500 speakers from industry, research and government made the conference program a genuine highlight at BIOTECHNICA. Top themes included the use of bioinformatics to improve data analysis capability and laboratory processes and protein engineering to treat cancer and immune disorders. Two

conference premieres, "Bio-IT World Europe" and the "Protein Engineering Summit — PEGS Europe", drew a highly positive response.

Representatives of the European Commission, the German Ministry for Education and Research (BMBF) and the corporations Henkel, Süd-Chemie and Volkswagen came together to discuss strategies for transforming Europe's economy into a "bio-based" economy. Two high-profile guests consisted of the European Commission's leading biotechnology representatives, EU Commissioner Janez Potocnik and Maive Rute, Director Biotechnologies. Both emphasized the continually growing importance and acceptance of biotechnology in the general population.

Another key topic at BIOTECHNICA involved financing assistance for startups. The new "Bio@Venture Conference" gave young companies an opportunity to present their ideas and innovations to potential investors. The first "Molecular Food Analytics" symposium highlighted the contribution that new analysis technologies can make towards detecting food allergens and genetically modified ingredients.

Networking hub for industry, government and research

One of the key aims of BIOTECHNICA was to provide a networking hub for industry, government and research. In the Biotechnology Project Forum the German Ministry of Education and Research presented all subsidized research projects completed in 2008. Around 120 scientists were available over the three-day show to talk with visitors and answer their questions. The "Science to Market" forum staged by the European Association of Pharma Biotechnology (EAPB) was staged to promote collaboration between industry and research in the area of pharmaceutical biotechnology. An excellent platform for direct networking between exhibitors and visitors was provided by the "BIOTECHNICA Innovation Forums", which were integrated into the exhibition and allowed for exhibitor presentations of their companies and products. The program of conferences, forums and workshops drew over 3,000 attendees in all.

The BIOTECHNICA partnering concept proved a successful mechanism for bringing business partners together from all over the world. International participants from 190 companies used this platform to widen their circle of business contacts. The number of scheduled business meetings was up a total of 30 percent on the previous year.

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The "jobvector career day" careers platform highlighted a host of attractive career prospects in the life sciences sector. Job-seekers visiting the event were able to speak personally with HR managers from leading companies.

A traditional exhibition highlight was the presentation of the EUROPEAN BIOTECHNICA AWARD, carrying a prize purse of 100,000 euros. This year's winner was the Swiss biopharmaceutical company NovImmune.

BIOTECHNICA — a global tradeshow brand

Apart from expanding itself to become Europe's leading networking hub for the biotech industry, BIOTECHNICA continues to set its sights on the other major biotech regions of the world. From 20 to 22 April 2010 the BIOTECHNICA AMERICA event will be held in New York, followed by the fourth BIOTECH CHINA, staged once again in Shanghai from 2 to 4 June 2010. The next BIOTECHNICA in Hannover will run from 5 to 7 October 2010.

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