

Globalization, Service, Communication: Fiera Milano's Strategy for Development

The year 2008 began with an important strategic agreement with the Hanover trade fair, which laid the foundations for launching Fiera Milano in China, with the possibility of taking on other major non-European markets in the future. The year has ended with the extension of that agreement to India and the provisional opening of the exhibition complex's railway station during Artigiano in Fiera (permanent opening scheduled for spring 2009). These were the first and last actions in a really dynamic year for Fiera Milano, which saw further advances in the relaunch of the exhibition centre and the accounts returning to the black (the first nine months will comfortably ensure that the targets of 320 million euros for consolidated income and 28 million for gross operating margin are met).

Progresses in 2008

Globalization, service, communication are the three principles that have guided Fiera Milano's actions. The process of globalization has been speeded up and, as noted with satisfaction by Fiera Milano Chairman Michele Perini, "The aim of doubling the number of overseas exhibitors and visitors within three years is now decidedly closer".

Significant progress has also been made in the continuous upgrading of services and the efficiency and overall usability of the exhibition centre. The complex system of road links has been joined by an excellent railway system, and Fiera Milano now has a station that is connected directly via a pedestrian subway to the metro and the pavilions. (see article on p. 17).

Big advances have also been made in terms of hosting visitors and exhibitors, following the completion of two new hotels, offering a total of 400 rooms

and standing just a few hundred metres away from the main entrance of the complex, which are scheduled to open in 2009.

Projects for 2009

In the new year, efforts will continue on the globalization front, with Fiera Milano looking for strong, local partners in Russia, Brazil and Turkey capable of replicating in those markets the model already implemented by the joint venture, with Fiera Milano bringing its global experience and the potential partner its specific local knowledge. Attention shall also remain focused on fully exploiting the "communication" element of the shows. Modern trade events are not just about the exhibitions themselves, but are part of an integrated business communication process.

According to CEO Claudio Artusi, "Modern trade fairs can no longer simply be showcases: they have to give companies ideas and stimulus to help with business, information and training, knowledge and relations. This is why we are growing our technical press business through a series of acquisitions of publishers specialising in trade titles. We are also investing in the conference market, where



Michele Perini

two major events should be noted: the acquisition of Business International, a well known brand in the creation and organization of conferences and workshops, and the launch of the project to triple the size of the Milan Convention Centre by 2010, which will make it Europe's leading venue.

2009 will undoubtedly be a tough year, but the economic crisis is not affecting deep-down confidence. "We are all bound to suffer, and the economic crisis will be selective, even for trade fairs – concludes Artusi – but I believe that we will come out of it okay, both Fiera Milano and Italy. Despite

everyone being so cautious, I am definitely an optimist. If we were to apply a short-term logic, then we would simply have to do what you do at difficult times: cut costs. We, on the other hand, will be doing much more. Firstly, we will be pushing ahead with the overseas investments. Then we will be further increasing investment in our trade fairs, in order to ensure a better return from our relations with clients. We are also in the fortunate position of being able to continue a development policy that others simply cannot, as Fiera Milano is a healthy company that is pretty much debt-free".



MIFUR: dal 2009 a fieramilano

MIFUR, il Salone internazionale della pellicceria e della pelle, dà appuntamento ai suoi visitatori dal 4 all'8 marzo, nei padiglioni di fieramilano a Rho. Dopo una prova generale nei nuovi padiglioni lo scorso 18 settembre, con la prima edizione di Mifur Small Ville, il MIFUR, storicamente posizionato al Portello di Milano, si sposta a Rho per inserirsi fra le manifestazioni dell'area pelle Micam (calzatu-

re) e Mipel (pelletteria) a creare, anche in concomitanza di Mido (occhialeria), un importante e sinergico evento espositivo.

Nell'edizione 2008, MIFUR registrò una superficie espositiva di 24.800 m², 286 espositori e 14.704 compratori. È da anni un momento di moda e d'incontro con i marchi internazionali, con il prêt à porter delle confezioni pellicceria, dell'abbigliamento in pelle, con gli accessori, le materie prime: le pelli, i modelli, i macchinari e i servizi di conceria.