

Fiera Milano Boosts the Fair Services and Reorganize the Group

by Luca Bianco

What is now the definitive permanent opening of the railway station and of the hotel (400 four star rooms, just a few hundred metres from the pavilions), crowns this great undertaking: in the first place the transfer of Fiera Milano from its historical site in the city to the hinterland and then the creation, by no means less complex, of the infrastructures. The cranes are now working at the new company management building, near Eastern Gate. But the best part has been done. 2009 ends an exciting period for Fiera Milano and another one is about to begin, with new priorities and objectives.

The cliente: key to success

“We must now exploit the formidable potentialities of a renewed Fiera Milano to the full” says Enrico Pazzali the newly appointed managing director, who will be steering at the helm for the period 2009-2012. “The key to success is the customer. This means working hard on fair organization and congressional services to ensure professional exhibitions, congresses and educational activities equal to the demands for promotion, development and communication made by concerns in continual evolution. This is the ground where the competitive game between the international fair complex companies will be played over the next few years. We want to concentrate our efforts and resources on ensuring loyalty and acquiring ever new customers, expanding and boosting the services that businesses expect from a great modern fair. We still have the exhibition showcase, but it is no longer sufficient. Those using it as exhibitors or professional visitors now demand of b2b events to particularly act as a go-between for building up business relationships, to acquire a deeper knowledge of market trends and developments in technology, update their business model and corporate organization and gain access to foreign markets at low costs”.

The renewed commitment towards the customer is undertaken at a critical time for economy, putting a great strain on companies in all the compartments and thence Fiera Milano exhibitors. But for this reason it has become even more urgent. “The small to

medium sized enterprises – continues Pazzali – have always been the main users of fair-related events and generate the greater part of our turnover (306 million in 2008). These enterprises find in the professional exhibitions their principal, if not only, instrument for promotion and internationalization. This is still so today, in the era of online communication. The specific function as an instrument for economic strategy to which a great fair complex is committed is an additional responsibility for us that others do not have, of which we are however very much aware. For this reason, and precisely in difficult times like the ones we are experiencing now, we must multiply our efforts to strengthen b2b events making them more attractive and to make support for the promotion and internationalization that ensure economy, more effective. We will be doing just this, amongst others reserving as far as 40 million Euro, put at our disposal by the Fondazione Fiera Milano partner in support of our exhibitions from here until 2012”.

The Group reorganization

This is only a part of the Fiera Milano commitments in this year of crisis: a crisis which, after the excellent performance of 2008, with a return to making a profit and a dividend, now induces maximum precaution in forecasts. And this is notwithstanding the sustainment ensured

by important bi- and tri-annual exhibitions, particularly in 2009. The other part of the commitment is an even stricter control on costs and maximizing efficiency. Such process has been taken up for some time and is now being accelerated, also under the form of a Group reorganization.

Within this scope the alternation at the top of Fiera Milano has coincided with the aggregation of four Group companies, totally controlled by Fiera Milano spa and active in organizing exhibitions: Fiera Milano International, Fiera Milano Tech, Fiera Milano ExpoCTS and Rassegne. This is how the Fiera universe was created, a single operator of exhibition events, with a 100 million euro business volume a year, rated amongst the leaders in Europe. This not only makes a more effective focalization on the core business possible, but also eliminates duplications and reduces structural costs, with expected beneficial effects on management. ■



Enrico Pazzali

Enrico Pazzali è il nuovo amministratore delegato di Fiera Milano Spa, nominato dal consiglio d'amministrazione della Società, riunitosi il 17 aprile 2009 sotto la presidenza di Michele Perini.

Pazzali, 44 anni, si è laureato in economia aziendale alla Bocconi, ed è stato direttore generale di Fiera Milano dal gennaio 2007. In precedenza aveva svolto incarichi direttivi in Regione Lombardia, nel Gruppo Poste Italiane, in Omnitel-Vodafone e in Compaq.

Enrico Pazzali is the new CEO of Fiera Milano SpA. He was appointed by the Company Board of Directors, which met last April 17th under the chairmanship of Michele Perini.

Pazzali, 44 years old and graduated in business economics at the Bocconi University, has been General Manager of Fiera Milano since January 2007. He has also held managerial positions in the Lombardia Region, Poste Italiane Group, Omnitel-Vodafone and Compaq.