

Growing market for fairs and exhibitions



Trade fairs are rightly said to reflect the state of the economy. In this age of the internet, many have professed a quick end to fairs and exhibitions. Meanwhile, not only are such events thriving, but they are even going from strength to strength, and fair and exhibition organizers never cease to amaze exhibitors and visitors with new ideas.

The good condition of Poland's exhibition industry is reflected in an annual report from the Polish Chamber of the Exhibition Industry. The publication shows that there were more than 28,000 exhibitors and over 800,000 square meters of leased exhibition space in Poland last year. Some could say these figures pale in comparison with those in Germany, but we need to bear in mind that Poland's exhibition industry did not really emerge until very recently. With the exception of the Poznań International Fair (MTP), which has just celebrated its 95th anniversary, most exhibition centers in Poland do not have a history dating back longer than 20 years. Poland's most well-established and vibrant fair and exhibition centers are in Kielce (Kielce Trade Fairs), Cracow (Targi w Krakowie), Gdańsk (MTG) and Warsaw (EXPO XXI, MT Polska), in addition to Poznań. Just recently some brand-new venues have opened in the cities of Katowice, Rzeszów, Opole and Ostróda.

The EXPO XXI center in Warsaw has hosted 46 fairs and exhibitions this year. They were held for 40 different industries, which is 10 more than last year. A lot of the events are held regularly at the venue and, importantly, most were attended by more exhibitors and visitors this time than last. To name a few examples, more people came to events such as the Gas Show (for natural gas systems), Packaging Innovations (packaging technology), Zieleń to Życie (maintenance of green areas), Festiwal Marketingu (marketing and advertising), FIWE (fitness and wellness), Fleet Market (car industry) and Warsaw Games Week (video games). There were also several new events for traditional trades such as jewelry (Gold Expo) and cosmetics (CosmeticBusiness). Follow-ups to these have already been scheduled for several years ahead.

I must mention a few other newcomers that best speak for what has been going on in new technology industries these days. These are not just one or two events, but a profusion of them: Dni Druku 3D, Mobility Days, Net Developers Days, eHandel and more. These events speak for our times and I believe they will grow faster than the more traditional industries if that is even the appropriate term anymore, seeing how new technology has penetrated almost all sectors from cosmetology to packaging to sports equipment.

New trends and technology were in evidence at the Festiwal Marketingu exhibition, and many visitors could not wait to apply what they saw in their advertising campaigns. New technology is also a given at the Warsaw Games Week, an exhibition of fantastic video games many of which I am sure will be among this year's Christmas bestsellers. Finally, new ideas and technology are

also a key attribute of the Fleet Market automotive exhibition, which has grown 40 percent since last year. All the new trends and growing numbers are clear evidence of an economic revival that I hope Polish enterprises will continue to benefit from for a long time to come.

By: Mrs. Żaneta Berus, the CEO of Warsaw's EXPO XXI venue and a member of the management board of Sapphire Group Poland.