

## Large crowds at boot Düsseldorf

## International trade fair confirms leading position on the world market

## Event attracts more young people

## Beach World sets new visitor record following move to new hall

boot Düsseldorf set records this year: 1,923 exhibitors from 68 different countries presented yachts, boats and accessories for all water sports activities on 220,000 square metres of stand space. Messe Düsseldorf CEO Werner M. Dornscheidt: "These figures are unique in the industry. No other water sports trade fair reflects the entire world market in all its diversity as completely as boot."

There were crowds of people in the 16 exhibition halls and boot 2018 confirmed its position as the top trade fair emphatically, with 247,000 visitors from 94 different countries (2017: 242,000 visitors). The trade fair succeeded in increasing the number of international visitors too. The countries from which most visitors came were the Netherlands, followed by Belgium, Switzerland, Italy, Austria and France. Most of the trade visitors from overseas came from the USA, China and Australia. Petros Michelidakis, boot Director, outlined the situation succinctly: "Our strategy of continuing to internationalise boot has worked. This is apparent now in our visitor structure. There has been as well a generation shift too; the visitors to boot are considerably younger." While the trade fair is managing outstandingly well to combine the features of a classic boat trade fair with the appeal of an up-to-the-minute trend and fun sports event. The "new" Beach World with the 65-metre-long flatwater pool and the standing wave "THE WAVE" proved to be a real attraction to young visitors.

Jürgen Tracht, Director of the German Association of the Water Sports Industry, explains the situation in the industry: "The water sports industry is in excellent shape. boot 2018 confirmed this unequivocally. The trade fair is a driving force behind the industry and will be helping to a very large extent to make sure that the manufacturers will continue to do good business in the coming year. The positive development in recent years was repeated by a good season in 2017. The high expectations were fulfilled. The water sports industry is booming." The maritime industry is benefitting from the positive overall economic situation throughout Europe. The manufacturers are expecting the stimulus provided by boot Düsseldorf to lead to substantial sales growth in the new boat segment. Where there is a definite trend towards larger yachts in both the sailing boat and motor boat sectors.



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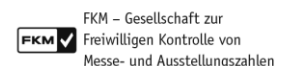
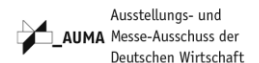
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The Beach World exhibitors were unanimous in saying that the move to Hall 8a was a complete success. The statistics confirm their assessment: the figures recorded in the previous year were exceeded by almost 10%, with just under 110,000 guests who watched the spectacular activities on “THE WAVE”, and 1,500 visitors who tried the wave out for themselves. The special concept of the Beach World – relaxed South Sea flair, plenty of action on the water and numerous stars to rub shoulders with – proved effective in the new hall too. One of the highlights was the visit by surfing icon Robby Naish on the first weekend of boot. “The last time I was at boot was 15 years ago. It is incredible what has happened since then. The Citywave in the hall is really good for our entire sport and gets more young people out onto the water. I will be coming back next year if at all possible”, Naish explained. Many of the visitors came to the Beach World simply for the experience. They took the opportunity of trying out the various activities, putting on the neoprene suits that were provided and getting comprehensively wet. The pool and the standing wave “THE WAVE” set up by Citywave® were very busy as a result. The many professional athletes representing various fun sports who came to Düsseldorf provided the necessary inspiration. On the weekends, the surfers and stand-up paddlers demonstrated radical moves on the water during the Wave Masters. The visitors responded to the two new attractions – tow-in windsurfing and foilboarding – very positively too. They were enthusiastic about the wakeboard show, during which impressive jumps and moves were demonstrated in the extended pool.

The excellently visited sailing halls were crowded during the nine days of the trade fair. The large sailing yachts over 60 feet long and the sailing catamarans were the particular centre of attention. The manufacturers had taken account of this and presented more large sailing yachts than ever before.

The luxury yacht hall 6 was more popular than even before – with both suppliers and visitors. Every single square metre was booked and the hall provided a splendid opportunity to see the luxurious models. According to the manufacturers, there is a general trend towards sophisticated, electronic equipment on the yachts as well as towards high-quality interior design ideas. The buyers of luxury yachts are certainly becoming younger and younger, since there are more and more wealthy young people who want to invest in expensive boats and experience the freedom they give to enjoy their time out on the water. Capacity utilisation at the shipyards is very good in the meantime and it is expected that boot 2018 will stimulate business even more.

The new Dive Center in Hall 3 in the form of a Caribbean diving base whetted



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the visitors' appetite for ocean diving. Diving beginners in particular were very taken by the open design and direct advice about diving material. The different topics that the exhibitors focussed on each day, presenting their latest diving computers, watches and clothing, gave experienced divers excellent opportunities to obtain information and test equipment.

Beginners were given tips and suggestions about the right choice of boat or the most attractive water sports destinations in Germany on the stand of the START BOATING campaign organised by the German Association of the Water Sports Industry.

Houseboats and maritime destinations were another popular area at the trade fair. For the first time, there was a special forum called Travel World in Hall 14 that concentrated on travelling, chartering, houseboat holidays and cruises. Such subjects as "The first charter trip as a sailor", tips about cabin chartering or the general topic of "Life on the water" attracted great interest.

Next year, boot Düsseldorf will be celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> birthday from 19. to 27. January 2019.

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