

Press

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Celebrating the 25th anniversary of its establishment in Hong Kong, Messe Frankfurt looks forward to an even stronger future in the Greater China region with a strengthened business outlook in Asia

Since its founding in 1949, the People's Republic of China has undergone various stages of economic reform over the past 70 years, resulting in ever greater participation in global markets. This change is being driven by the implementation of a number of different policies and strategies including the introduction of foreign investment into local markets, foreign capital investments and the country's "Belt & Road Initiative" in 2013. As a foreign corporation in China, Messe Frankfurt is the world's largest trade fair organiser with its own exhibition grounds. The annual sales of the company have risen to a new record of €718 million in 2018. Since 1987 Messe Frankfurt has been present in the Greater China market allowing the company to fully grasp every opportunity that has arisen from the reform policies. This long and fruitful presence in the region has played a major role in the success the company enjoys today.

This year marks the 25th anniversary of the establishment of Messe Frankfurt (Hong Kong) Ltd, which coincides with the 70th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China. Mr Stephan Buurma, Member of the Board of Management of Messe Frankfurt Group, remarked on the importance of China's economic reform and opening up that has led to the Group's development in the region. "The reform and opening up is paramount in meaning to foreign companies like us who have successfully gained a foothold in the Greater China region. The Chinese government has made concerted efforts in attracting foreign investment and investing in cutting-edge technology and bringing R&D capital into the local market. Through all of this, exhibition services have been one of the main gateways to achieve these goals." Messe Frankfurt was quick to take advantage of the reform policies and started its business in China in 1987. Mr Buurma continued: "Messe Frankfurt launched its first trade fair,

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Interstoff Asia – International Fabric Show, in Hong Kong in 1987. In total, more than 40 trade fairs have been organised in the Greater China region today. Starting out in the beginning as a small office in Hong Kong, we have grown to become the regional headquarters for Asia and the largest overseas subsidiary. Messe Frankfurt now operates 13 offices across 10 different cities throughout Asia including Greater China, India, Japan and Korea, employing more than 640 staff. The success of the Hong Kong regional office in the execution of businesses in Asia can be attributed to the professional talent, diversity of services, distinct brand strategy and richness in industry resources that we have built.”

Every year, Messe Frankfurt hosts more than 40 professional exhibitions in Greater China. Among these fairs are a number of world-leading events that have grown to become trendsetters in their own respective industries. This includes Intertextile Shanghai Apparel Fabrics which is the world’s most influential event in the global apparel fabrics sector, while Automechanika Shanghai is the largest automotive fair of its kind in Asia. Other world-renowned trade fairs include the Guangzhou International Lighting Exhibition and Music China.

CIIE participation echoes with Messe Frankfurt’s active response to Chinese government policies

Messe Frankfurt enjoyed a successful participation at the first edition of the China International Import Expo (CIIE) in 2018. This year, the fair will be held from 5 – 10 November in Shanghai and Messe Frankfurt will return with another 300 sqm of dedicated exhibition space as at the previous edition. CIIE 2019 will again highlight the fair’s main objectives of opening up China’s domestic market to the world and advocating the five new policies of the Chinese government, namely: further market liberalisation, export expansion, business environment enhancement, implementation of the principle of equal treatment and doing business negotiation.

Mr Stephan Buurma commented on the participation of CIIE 2019. “These new government policies are immensely favourable to our business development along the Belt and Road route. As the Belt and Road Initiative plays a vital role in further opening up the Chinese market, we are going to demonstrate to our clients how we can help Chinese enterprises leverage our platform to explore overseas markets and promote trade and cultural exchange.”

With the 60-plus economies along the Belt and Road route, Messe Frankfurt is well positioned with the presence of six subsidiary companies and 27 international sales offices. In 2018, the company organised 38 trade fairs along the route with 4,877 Chinese exhibitors, including CAPAS, Automechanika Ho Chi Minh City and Automechanika Astana.

Apart from organising exhibitions and events, Messe Frankfurt also supports other trade fairs organised along the route including the China Commodity Fair Moscow and China Machinery Fair Moscow.

Another key message in Messe Frankfurt's participation at CIIE is to highlight the number and scale of the latest projects in the Greater Bay Area. Promoting regional economic cooperation, the Area, together with the Pearl River-Xijiang as key economic support zones, will accelerate the economic development in South China as well as the trade with Southeast Asia. Mr Buurma continued: "As an extension of the Belt and Road Initiative, the Greater Bay Area Plan can enhance the role the Initiative plays in fostering China's economic development and opening up. We will utilise these favorable circumstances to expand our reach to the Shenzhen Special Economic Zone and encourage our overseas clients to seize business opportunities in this high potential market ahead of others."

Shenzhen offers enormous potential in the Greater Bay Area Plan. In 2020, the company will operate several new trade fairs and relocate some existing trade fairs to the new exhibition centre – Shenzhen World Exhibition & Convention Center. They include:

- Toy & Edu China (March, 2020)
- Baby & Stroller China (March, 2020)
- Licensing China (March, 2020)
- Formnext + PM South China (September, 2020)
- Intertextile Pavilion Shenzhen (October 2020)

Community at its core with dedicated CSR activities

While Messe Frankfurt is enjoying steady growth in its core businesses, it is also dedicated to supporting social and environmental initiatives as an integral part of its corporate philosophy. Through its trade fairs and CSR projects, Messe Frankfurt strives to raise local public awareness for a number of important issues.

In March 2019, the tree-planting event CAPAS Arbour Day took place in Meishan, Sichuan, to promote the cultural and ecological development of the province. The event highlighted the importance of environmental conservation and the operation of a sustainable business model, in turn providing a better living environment for future generations.

Apart from the CAPAS Arbour Day, there have been a number of other special CSR projects organised over the past few years. At Music China 2018, the fair featured the "Music Warms Our Hearts" autism charity project. An autistic children's band took part in a 'flash mob' performance at the show. Proceeds from the ticketing were donated to the Shanghai

Education Development Foundation. The Paperworld China team also visited under-developed areas in Yunnan to provide well-needed school supplies. Thanks to support by government-affiliated associations in Yunnan and sponsorship from exhibitors of Paperworld China 2017, stationery and other necessities worth RMB 640,000 were distributed. This included desks and chairs for schools as well as bedding and television sets.

Messe Frankfurt is also dedicated to supporting social causes through direct donations. Since 2007, the company has annually donated HKD 200,000 to major charitable organisations across Hong Kong. In 2008, RMB 300,000 was given to the China Red Cross to provide assistance to survivors of the Sichuan earthquake. The company has also initiated a series of voluntary activities to promote work-life balance through supporting NGOs. These have included the Stride for a Cure in 2012 which raised funds for the prevention and treatment of cancer, as well as a home-visit programme for the elderly in 2016.

Furthermore, in light of growing ecological concerns in society, since 2013 Messe Frankfurt has extended its portfolio of events for environmental technologies under the segments of Technology, Mobility & Logistics and Textiles & Textile Technology. These concerns were addressed in several themed exhibitions like Eco Expo Asia, as well as other smaller industry segments, such as air and water purification systems in buildings, sustainable technologies for textiles and accessories, new energy vehicles and remanufacturing of automobile parts.

For more information, please visit www.messefrankfurt.com.hk.

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Background information on Messe Frankfurt

Messe Frankfurt is the world's largest trade fair, congress and event organiser with its own exhibition grounds. With more than 2,500 employees at 30 locations, the company generates annual sales of around €718 million. We have close ties with our industry sectors and serve our customers' business interests efficiently within the framework of our Fairs & Events, Locations and Services business fields. One of the Group's key USPs is its closely knit global sales network, which extends throughout the world. Our comprehensive range of services – both onsite and online – ensures that customers worldwide enjoy consistently high quality and flexibility when planning, organising and running their events. The wide range of services includes renting exhibition grounds, trade fair construction and marketing, personnel and food services. Headquartered in Frankfurt am Main, the company is owned by the City of Frankfurt (60 percent) and the State of Hesse (40 percent).

For more information, please visit our website at: www.messefrankfurt.com.