

JAM COLOGNE, 2009 EVENT REPORT

JAM Cologne more or less retained its 'international image for the young' this year too but with the exception of some skepticism from few exhibitors who did not receive expected results. This is mainly attributed to the prevailing recession conditions and also to the news concerning the state of Berlin's trade fair business with endorsement of Bread & Butter moving back to Berlin. But the organizers held on to the view that JAM was not in direct competition with other fairs and still was one-of-its-kind fair for the medium segment.

JAM was held in 2009 from January 30 to Feb 1 at the Rheinparkhallen Exhibition Centre in Cologne, Germany. At this twice-a-year event, there were present 10,400 visitors in January this year. This number increased by a considerable over 30%. 370 exhibitors presented their collections at the fair. Visitors came mainly from Germany, The Netherlands and Belgium. There were also visitors from Bosnia, Poland, Austria and Switzerland. This showed that the show has retained its international flavor.

The segments displayed included Denim, Sportswear, Streetwear, Young Fashion and Accessories. The product-focused trade fair generally kept pleasant working atmosphere and modest settings. According to Sebastian Klinder, JAM Trade Fair Management and Partner with the organizing Munich Fabric Start Exhibitions, "The trade fair was an all-round success. The extension to three days was welcomed by all participants. The frequency on Sunday was even better than on the two preceding fair days."



Rife Rumors Sapping the JAM:

There were news stories making rounds at the JAM 2009, regarding the state of Berlin's trade fair industry as such and also about Bread & Butter confirming their movement of location back to Berlin. Such wide-spread stories did cause some concern in the minds of the exhibitors and visitors in general. The response to the event was positive as was evident from the significant increase in visitor

numbers but the skepticism regarding the overall outcome of the event continued. This atmosphere was well summed up in the comment of exhibitor Peter Kelzenberg, Managing Director Pioneer Jeans, "It is too bad that the changes regarding Bread & Butter dominated the discussions at JAM. More time was spent speculating about the future than acknowledging the current and well organised trade fair. We were convinced by the concept of JAM right from the start and view it as the ideal platform to present our collection." But, the management team stuck to their guns and tried every bit to put these speculations to rest as was evident by the comment of Günther Sommer, JAM Marketing and Sales Manager, "Thanks to our new concept as a working trade fair we are not direct in competition and will continue to offer a platform in the medium segment."



Bland Business Results Pose Concern:

JAM continues to be known as jeans and denim fair for the working people and everyday users. The increased numbers of visitors flocking the show was a good indication of the popularity of the show. For most exhibitors the fair was successful but despite the increase in numbers of visitors some exhibitors were reportedly not completely satisfied with the results. There seemed to be an issue with the final results falling short of expectations as many exhibitors were not happy with the resulted outcome. Melanie Bruss, Marketing Coordinator Germany K-Swiss commented, "Unfortunately, we are not happy with the result of our trade fair participation. The visitor frequency left a bit to be desired. We had expected better results, especially because of our stand location close to the main entrance. Having some other exhibitors from our market environment would have been good, as this could have surely activated more customers." This lack of results could be either because of the dubious quality of visitors or also be attributed to the state of economic recession generally gripping the industry, and the rest of the world as a whole.

Some exhibitors came forth with some valid suggestions to improve upon this state of affairs. “We are very happy overall with the course of the trade fair. However, it would be good if the exhibitor portfolio, especially in the denim segment, were to include additional renowned brands,” was the insightful remark by Serdar Mazmanoglu, Managing Director Mavi Jeans.

The dates for the next event in July are yet to be announced.

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