

Happy Birthday interpack!

50 Years at the Top as the World's No. 1 Fair for Innovative Packaging Solutions

Filling lines, printing and deep drawing presses, automatic injection moulding machines and lines for producing dry baked goods: All of this was already on display at the first interpack as early as 1958. While some terms featuring in the then interpack range sound somewhat strange these days such as bag emptying machines, lead-sealing

capsules and automatic praliné filling machines the first final press release reveals some amazing facts: "Visitors were presented with virtually the entire technical ranges for packaging machines,

packaging materials and confectionary machine manufacture. The generously spaced, light-flooded halls in Düsseldorf were dominated by intimate business talks. At times, the stands of the exhibiting firms were governed by a "Babylonian" babble of languages. There is no doubt about it – alongside the Paris Salon and the Olympia Show in London a new, lasting packaging trade fair of truly European scope has been established here and its repercussions on the market will stimulate the investment activities of the consumer industries for a long time to come."

March 1958 saw exactly 255 firms, 60 of them from abroad, occupying 11,844 m² of net exhibition space at interpack. The organisers counted 32,500 international trade visitors at the former Düsseldorf Fair Grounds at Ehrenhof. "Packaging technology and materials have matured to become such crucial economic factors in Germany that they virtually call for an independent



Photo/Foto: Messe Düsseldorf

*Modern packaging of fresh food
"anno 1960".*

*Modernes Abpacken frischer
Lebensmittel anno 1960.*

trade fair with their strong impact," were the words used in the visitors' leaflet back then to explain the idea underlying interpack. A Special Show covered the topic "Seaworthy Packing" while one lecture focused on "On the Orthodoxy of Packaging Machines".

The second event in 1960 already attracted 515 exhibitors from 13 nations and 55,670 visitors. In the 60s the trade fair continued as a 3-yearly event: exhibitor and visitor figures went up continuously as did attendance from abroad. 1975 saw 1,129 enterprises from 21 countries exhibit at the new exhibition centre in the north of Düsseldorf where the trade fair had moved to. These firms occupied over 86,000 m² of net exhibition space. In the mid 70s investment in packaging machinery in Germany accounted for approximately 2%. At this early stage interpack was already dubbed the "fashion show of international packaging design". It telegraphed to the world the solutions already available to solve the problems associated with sales-promoting packaging and new solutions in the pipeline. Other focal points included themes like "From the candy boiler to fully automatic confectionary production", "fully automatic packaging lines for pharmaceuticals" and the "convenience effect of consumer-driven packaging". Emerging environmental consciousness demanded a re-thinking process from the packaging sector: optimise rather than maximise – re-use rather than waste! The technical highlight presented then was a packaging line capable to "produce in one minute a hundred combinations of outer box and hermetically sealed inner box, to fill, automatically check the weight, replace any damaging oxygen from the goods filled with inert gas, close and assort them and finally stack them on transport pallets." Over 111,000 visitors, 39% of these from abroad, were attracted to Düsseldorf by these innovations.

interpack also developed fantastically over the following years: be it exhibitor and visitor figures, international attendance and square metres occupied – all of these rose continually. interpack had long since become the top event in its industry, the undisputed No. 1 worldwide. In 1990 over 2,000 exhibitors from 35 countries were presented on more than 125,000 m² net exhibition space.

The percentage of visitors from abroad was also rising: of the 170,000 visitors in total 52% no longer came from Germany. Now the dominating trends were "an increase in packaging suitable for machine handling", "more aseptic packaging systems" and "a stronger focus on quality assurance in view of spoilage, damage, product liability and environmental damage". In the early 90s the industry was kept busy with an avid packaging debate: reduction of packaging waste, a focus on recycling – without foregoing the typical product and packaging diversity.

In the years that followed increasingly widespread environmental awareness and rising globalisation became as important as ever; since the turn of the millennium the Internet has served as an additional information platform active also in-between trade fairs. While 2005 was already considered a record year with 2,654 exhibitors from 57 countries on exhibition space measuring 163,400 m², the organisers expect further record-breaking figures for 2008 – the anniversary year of interpack:

From 24 to 30 April 2008 the international packaging industry will meet in Düsseldorf at the largest interpack the world has ever seen. Both exhibitors and visitors will benefit from the additional space provided by another new hall. Boasting 19 halls interpack 2008 will utilize the complete capacities of the Düsseldorf Exhibition Centre. Just like packaging, packaging machines have also undergone a dynamic development. Today there is an automatic solution for just about every packaging procedure; today's machines can wrap up to 2,300 boiled sweets in a minute or close 70,000 bottles per hour.

Boasting a new image and a new subtitle – PROCESSES AND PACKAGING – interpack will be presented as the world's most important packaging trade fair at its 50th anniversary: modern, dynamic and a trendsetter for the industry. It showcases innovations along the entire value chain thereby offering – as before – a complete package, unique worldwide, for everyone seeking solutions for their current packaging needs or wanting to secure innovative edge for the future. The motivation is exactly the same as it was 50 years ago.