

## Spielwarenmesse confirms position as most important industry event

- International participation remains high
- Innovations underline quality of the fair
- The whole toy market gathers in Nuremberg

Boasting an improved hall structure, innovative products and a colourful supporting programme, the Spielwarenmesse fittingly celebrated its 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary with industry members from all over the world, confirming its position as the leading trade fair for toys. Both exhibitors and visitors attending the five-day event from 30 January to 3 February, provided a realistic reflection of the global market. 2,886 companies from 68 countries presented their innovations at Nuremberg's exhibition centre to 68,500 trade visitors and buyers, who flocked to the fair from 131 nations.

The Spielwarenmesse mirrored the process of consolidation currently under way on the toy market. Factors such as the continued decline of independent retailers and the reassessment of distribution channels are affecting visitor numbers. The quality of visitors remains consistent and their international composition pleasing, with 64 per cent travelling to Nuremberg from abroad. Paul Heinz Bruder, Managing Director of Bruder Spielwaren, states: "For us, the Spielwarenmesse isn't just the most important but also the most international trade fair. The quality of the visitors is extremely high, giving rise to good prospects for 2019." Also in Nuremberg, Ynon Kreiz, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Mattel, concludes: "The Nuremberg toy fair brings together the best of our international toy communities."

In terms of overall satisfaction, the number of exhibitors rating the Spielwarenmesse either as "very good" or "good" amounted to 83.5 per cent, the highest result ever. The most important factor for companies is the ability to attract new customers. The organiser has supported them in their efforts by introducing forward-looking measures such as an improved hall structure. The new product group Electronic Toys, for example, moved into Hall 4A. Sebastian Budich, Managing Director of Jazwares, is happy with the new location: "We're delighted with the high footfall that comes with it and the strong interest in our

diverse product portfolio." In addition, Hall 7A united Model Railways and Model Construction under one roof, whilst the product group Festive Articles, Carnival, Fireworks in Halls 8 and 9 introduced several innovative changes. Manuela Pfeifer, Managing Director of Rubies Deutschland, describes the Showtime activity area as a great asset: "The catwalk allowed us to show trade buyers many of our new costumes several times a day. This is something we just couldn't do at our own stand."

Not only the special areas but also the extended offering of information and industry knowledge was warmly welcomed. Be it in the Toys meet Books area or at the Toy Business Forum, the talks by highly respected experts were all well attended. The theme of licensing now has a firm place at the Spielwarenmesse thanks not least to the exclusive LicensePreview and the new LicenseTalks, as Joachim Knödler, Managing Director Central Europe Copyright Promotions Licensing Group, underlines: "All this makes the trade fair the most important event for licensors." The overall significance of this industry event has increased still further, with the majority of exhibitors seeing it as a decisive marketing tool. 90 per cent of them intend to exhibit again in 2020.

"For our business, the hours spent at the Spielwarenmesse in Nuremberg are the most important hours of the whole year," states Larry Shaw, creator of Astrojax, adding, "We're really excited and grateful to be featured in this year's TrendGallery alongside so many other amazing products." Both the three main trends "Ready, Steady, Play!", "The WOW Effect" and "Toys 4 Kidults" and the ToyAwards, extended this year to include a fifth category for "Start-ups", provide retailers and buyers with valuable guidance among the 120,000 or so innovations on display in 18 Halls. "Receiving this globally renowned Award at the Spielwarenmesse is really significant and a great start to the new year," emphasises ToyAward winner Dennis Gies, Board Member of Hape International.

Jürgen Huck of the eponymous family-run business is one of 21 exhibitors who have been coming to the fair right from the start: "We're more than proud and are delighted to be exhibiting at the fair for the 70<sup>th</sup> time." Frank R. Schneider,

Head of Rolly Toys, is also among the jubilarians, stating: “The Spielwarenmesse is the fair for us. If you exhibit here, you don’t have to exhibit anywhere else.” The 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Spielwarenmesse was celebrated not only by honouring the exhibitors, but also with the ToyFestival, which attracted more than 2,000 people, and the fireworks display on the Saturday evening.

Ernst Kick, CEO of Spielwarenmesse eG, concludes: “We obviously have no direct control over the market, but what we can do, is ensure that all our actions are tuned to the future. We’re delighted to be the high-quality, leading trade fair that exhibitors and trade visitors expect, and we intend to approach the event with the same energy and commitment in years to come.” The next Spielwarenmesse is taking place in Nuremberg from 29 January to 2 February 2020.

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**Spielwarenmesse®**

Spielwarenmesse®, the leading international fair for toys, hobbies and leisure, is organised by the fair and marketing services provider Spielwarenmesse eG. The trade fair creates a comprehensive communication and ordering platform for 2,900 national and international manufacturers. The presentation of new products and the extensive industry overview provide a valuable pool of information for annual market orientation for 70,000 buyers and toy traders from over 130 nations. Spielwarenmesse® has also been a protected word mark in Germany since 2013.

Fair dates: Spielwarenmesse®, Wednesday to Sunday, 29 Jan – 2 Feb 2020