

# PRESS RELEASE

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Page 1

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## ZOW 2013: the key to the German market

### Exhibitors praise outstanding quality of visitors

For furniture suppliers looking for a direct way into the important German furniture market, the 19th ZOW international supplier fair for the furniture industry and interior design proved to be the ideal platform for presenting their wares and making contacts and it came at just the right point in the year. From 18-21 February 2013, 402 companies from 27 countries exhibited at the Bad Salzuflen exhibition centre, including 60 first-time exhibitors from 15 different countries. The ratio of German to non-German exhibitors was 63% to 37%. Suppliers from the important furniture cluster in Ostwestfalen-Lippe made up 39% of the German and 25% of all exhibitors. The exhibition covered around 24 000 m<sup>2</sup> in halls 20, 21 and 22. Provisional figures show that around 11 800 visitors came to the Bad Salzuflen exhibition centre over the four days, a third of whom travelled from outside Germany.

Horst Rudolph, Managing Director of Clarion Events Deutschland, summed up the event on its final day: "Once again the suppliers at ZOW have proven that they are driving innovation in the furniture industry and interior design. Faced with a tough environment on several foreign markets, the slight drop in exhibitor and visitor numbers to this year's fair was to be expected. Nevertheless, the key groups of visitors once again attended. Numerous German furniture manufacturers, but also planners, important foreign producers and representatives of well-known trade organisations came to Bad Salzuflen to discover the latest products, concepts and processes from the supplier industry. The slight drop in visitor numbers was irrelevant because many of the exhibitors we spoke to said that this was more than compensated for by the outstanding quality of the customer contacts made." And Rudolph adds: "The fact that the key decision-makers from leading German and European companies like Alno, Rauch, Staudt and Ikea chose to attend again, confirms that the market needs an annual event. And these important groups of visitors are clearly looking for a greater presence of exhibitors focusing on decor."

Andreas Bielefeld, product development manager at Nobilia, Verl, a ZOW visitor and since 2011 a member of the ZOW advisory board, confirmed this at the ZOW press conference: "What makes ZOW so attractive is that the right partners come together at just the right time of year. It is still important that the trade fair covers as wide a selection of supplier products as possible. This is an

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area that needs looking at – especially with regard to surfaces and design. Tastes and trends in these products are changing all the time and I believe that only presenting them once every two years just isn't frequent enough."

More opinions of ZOW:

**Ulf Weissenbach, owner of wb-tech Weissenbach Beschlagtechnik, Bad Salzuflen:** "We consider ZOW to be the most important trade fair for the supplier industry because the majority of suppliers attend, enabling them to continuously present their new products on an annual basis. For us the particular appeal of ZOW for the furniture industry is also the quality of both the domestic and foreign visitors. Every year, ZOW is a permanent fixture in our diaries."

**Michael Brüdel, managing director, Friedrich Schwertfeger GmbH & Co. KG, Bielefeld (first-time exhibitor):** "A fantastic ambience and a very pleasant atmosphere. We are very happy with our stand, made some interesting customer contacts and had some great discussions."

**Eric Bull, Area Manager for Germany, Camar SpA, Figino Serenza (CO), Italy:** "ZOW remains an important event for us as it takes place at just the right point in the calendar. The clientele is regional, but plays a decisive role for us at national level."

**Peter Schubert, managing director, imi-verbund Werkstoffplatten / H. Schubert GmbH & Co. KG, Wettringen:** "We've been exhibiting at ZOW since 2006, during which time our company has gone from strength to strength. This is where we meet our existing national customers and new potential ones. We also have important discussions at ZOW with our specialist timber dealers, e.g. to talk about new products like imi-altholz, because the products are being presented here for the first time. The feedback we get is very useful."

ZOW visitor **Dr. Lucas Heumann, managing director of VHK Holz- und Möbelverbände in Herford (Trade Associations for Wood and Furniture Industries):** "The furniture industry has developed a branched network of processes organised along work lines. The industry therefore relies on efficient suppliers who are capable of also implementing their product innovations. Close communication between players on the market is indispensable. An attractive trade fair like ZOW offers the best platform for this, especially as Ostwestfalen-Lippe is so important to the furniture industry. And not least due to its perfect timing in relation to the relevant in-house trade fairs in autumn."

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## Innovations for construction projects and RFID you can relate to

ZOW 2013 provided visitors with products and processes ranging from fittings systems and accessories to timber materials. Horst Rudolph: "Shop-fitting in particular enjoyed prominence at this year's trade fair. We had run a targeted advertising campaign amongst architects and planners in advance of the event, which boosted the number of visitors from these target groups. Exciting new developments and applications from suppliers in the glass and lighting segments in particular attracted a lot of interest from visitors. Exhibitor feedback was extremely positive."

The "igeL Forum" area concentrated on new developments in lightweight furniture construction. Interesting young companies from the national supplier industry presented their product and process knowledge in hall 2D in the "BAFA" area. The major "RFID Factory" joint presentation showcased new wireless technology solutions along the furniture industry's value-added chain in an area covering around 250 m<sup>2</sup>. The use of RFID in new furniture logistics was just one of the highlights. Through practical presentations, the topic of RFID has become established as a permanent fixture and attractive point of call at ZOW. This was underlined by **Andreas Ruf, deputy managing director of the Verband der Deutschen Wohnmöbelindustrie e.V., Herford (Association of the German Home Furniture Industry)**: "It was very interesting to see the theoretical issue of RFID in real-life applications in the RFID Factory. – That's RFID you can relate to!"

**Horst Koitka, managing director of abaco Informationssysteme GmbH, Löhne**, worked with partner companies to create the RFID Factory: "We have been successfully organising the RFID Factory now for a number of years at ZOW, creating a better awareness of RFID amongst visitors. This year we were able to present concepts resulting from discussions with customers in the past. Visitors now approach us with specific requests and problems they are looking to solve."

The next date for the annual ZOW has been set: the 20th ZOW will run from 10-13 February 2014 at the Bad Salzungen exhibition centre.

Up-to-date ZOW photos will be available to download shortly from [www.zow.de](http://www.zow.de) Service - Downloadcenter

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Information on ZOW:

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## Clarion Events Deutschland GmbH

Clarion Events Deutschland GmbH, Bielefeld, is a 100% subsidiary of Clarion Events Ltd., London. Since its start in Germany in 2010, it has organised the annual trade show ZOW (international supplier fair for the furniture industry and interior design) in Bad Salzuflen as well as the FMB (plant and machinery industry supplier fair). With its own subsidiary Clarion Events TR, it organises the ZOW in Istanbul. For the ZOW in Moscow, Clarion works in cooperation with a Russian licensee. The company's goals include initiating additional specialised trade shows and congresses that aim to provide added value and first-class service for the clientele they set out to reach. The Managing Directors of Clarion Events Deutschland GmbH are Simon Kimble and Mike Sicely, London, as well as Horst Rudolph, Bielefeld.

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