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SMM: Maritime Sector Shows Strength and Innovative Power

Today, Friday, is the final day of SMM 2018. The trade fair brought together around 50,000 industry visitors from more than 120 countries, once again highlighting its importance as the leading international maritime trade fair. Under the motto "Trends in SMMart Shipping", the fair focused on digitalisation and 'green shipping' this year. Featuring a total of 2,289 exhibitors from 69 nations, and five accompanying conferences, SMM more than met the industry's high expectations, setting new standards for internationality and innovation.

Hamburg, 07/09/2018 – Thirteen halls covering a total of 93.000 m² exhibition floor: SMM has again demonstrated in impressive ways that it is rightly called the biggest and most important trade fair of the global maritime sector. Bernd Aufderheide, President and CEO of Hamburg Messe und Congress GmbH, is highly pleased with the outcome of the four-day event: "SMM 2018 was a full success, not only for us as the organisers but also, and especially so, for the exhibitors and visitors. We again welcomed the Who's Who of the maritime world to our exhibition halls this year, and we have seen again that there is nothing that can replace the person-to-person interaction between the key players of the sector. We successfully addressed the shipping community's most pressing issues, delivering fresh impetus for the future." Aufderheide was also extremely pleased about the fact that Kitack Lim, Secretary General of the International Maritime Organization (IMO), was able to attend SMM. Lim participated in the SMM opening ceremony at the Hamburg City Hall as well as the opening press conference and was a guest speaker at one of the special conferences where he explained the environmental agenda of IMO.

Furthermore, SMM 2018 welcomed 15 business and 12 political delegations from Germany and other countries.

The digital revolution – a maritime reality

It was not by accident that the organisers of SMM had chosen the motto "Trends in SMMart Shipping": Digitalisation is one of the key drivers of the industry, along with environment protection. Many exhibition stands gave evidence of this, frequently using touchscreens, simulators and virtual reality goggles to make their innovative technologies more tangible for visitors. "This year you can really see the digital revolution entering the maritime sector. SMM is a great place to meet up with this," said Frank Coles, president of Transas Group, a Wärtsilä company. Other exhibitors agreed: "As the digital revolution becomes maritime reality, SMM 2018 has proved to be the ideal opportunity to launch the ABB Ability™ Marine Pilot Control dynamic positioning (DP) system as part of the journey towards autonomous shipping," explained Mikko Lepistö, Senior Vice President at ABB Marine & Ports, PG Digital Solutions. "All of our major customers are here, and the organisers of SMM have worked tirelessly together with our team to make this possible."





Hamburg hosts the maritime world

SMM reflects the entire value chain of the maritime industry: From lube oil filters offered by the specialist Bollfilter to the signal horn by Zöllner through to Furuno's radar system and a ship engine manufactured by the global market leader, MAN Energy Solutions, the diversity of exhibits was breath-taking. The fair's roughly 50,000 visitors were able to choose Theme Routes guiding them to specific exhibitors, including the new Cruise & Ferry Route. Interior design for ships, and in particular, cruise ship cabin design, was especially popular this year: "Being here is extremely valuable for us. We had countless great conversations with partners from around the world," reports Thomas Töpfer, CEO of RReinhold & Mahla.

New business contacts, new products, new strategies

The opportunity to network is something both, exhibitors and industry visitors appreciate particularly at SMM: "Attending this fair every two years is a must for us since it is here we can meet up with all our partners and customers in one place," said Jan-Christoph Löttsch, Director After Sales & Service at Raytheon Anschutz.

New products, new people, new strategies – SMM was once again the industry's top platform for presenting novelties to the world and negotiating deals. "Rolls-Royce Power Systems, with its core brand MTU, is developing at an aggressive pace, transforming from an engine manufacture into a provider of integrated solutions. There is no better platform to showcase that than SMM, the leading trade fair of the maritime sector," said CEO Andreas Schell.

Innovation was also a key theme at the Siemens stand. "To us, SMM is always a good way to gauge the mood in the market and look for new trends and topics," said Matthias Schulze, Executive Vice President Marine at Siemens. Alfa Laval for the first time presented an especially powerful ballast water management system to its customers at SMM. "Customers are especially interested in products addressing the new environmental regulations," stressed Klaus Maak, Divisional Manager Marine MidEuropa.

As always, many great business deals were finalised at SMM. For example, GEA announced an order from P&O Cruises for its innovative industrial refrigeration technology. Other exhibitors likewise expressed their satisfaction about major new orders. For example, the classification society DNV GL reported having been contracted to supervise and classify a 2,750-TEU containership newbuilding project at the Chinese shipyard Huangpu-Wenchong (HPWS), and the ship propeller manufacturer MMG seized the day to deliver the world's biggest containership propeller on occasion of SMM.

Successful debuts

An event that received plenty of attention was the "Maritime 3D-Printing Show Area", something that had never been seen at a maritime trade fair before. "3D printing is a technology that really catches on, and our conversations have been going very well," summarised Lina Harms who represented the Maritime Cluster Norddeutschland, one of the partners of SMM. SMM was again complemented by high-profile conferences covering specific topics such as digitalisation (Maritime Future Summit), environment protection (Global Marine Environmental Congress), ocean research (Offshore Dialogue) as well as security and defence (Maritime Security & Defence). With an attendance of more than 500 guests, the response was excellent. Another grand premiere at SMM



2018 was the TradeWinds Shipowners Forum, which had prepared a multifaceted programme featuring renowned speakers.

There is a great demand for young talents and skilled experts in the maritime sector. This is why SMM hosts the Maritime Career Market (MCM) as a job exchange and a platform highlighting career and training opportunities within the industry. The Career Forum, a series of presentations about maritime professions and careers, was another first at this SMM.

Maritime industry shows optimism

All in all, the general mood has clearly improved, compared with the year 2016 where the effects of the shipping crisis were still felt very strongly: For example, as the four-day SMM came to an end, Trond Rolstad Paulsen, Sales Manager Sensing & Digital Solutions at the Norwegian technology company Kongsberg, summed up his impressions: "It's very good this year, very well visited, especially on the opening day. People seem to have a positive mindset and appear willing to invest." Bernard Meyer, CEO of Meyer Werft, one of the world's leading cruise ship yards, arrived at a similar conclusion: "It was once again an outstanding show of the maritime industry." It is heartening to see the sector's economic situation being assessed in much more positive terms than in recent years.

The next SMM will take place from 8 to 11 September 2020 in Hamburg.

For further information as well as high-resolution photos and footage from SMM 2018, visit <https://www.smm-hamburg.com/presse/> and follow us on social media:    

For comprehensive information on the SMM 2018 visitor survey please contact:

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