

## **Increase in visitors at boot Düsseldorf**

By IBI Magazine

Despite the economic downturn, this year's boot Düsseldorf closed on Sunday with a 0.9 per cent increase in visitor numbers.

According to show organiser Messe Düsseldorf, more than 240,000 people from 60 countries attended the nine-day event, which ran from January 23-31. Around 1,568 exhibitors from 55 countries were also in attendance, displaying a wide range of new boats, equipment and accessories across 17 exhibition halls.

"We achieved our targets to the full," says Werner Matthias Dornscheidt, chairman and CEO of Messe Düsseldorf. "Not only did we succeed in giving the industry an important boost, we were also able to interest more young people and families in water sports and the leading fair in the industry, boot in Düsseldorf.

"The concept, which aimed to place greater emphasis on hands-on events where people could get involved and experience water sports for themselves in the halls at the fair, was a resounding success. It was just a pity that the extreme winter conditions prevented some potential visitors from attending boot. Following the healthy rise in the number of visitors in the first few days the numbers ebbed, ending up with only a slight increase on last year by the end of the fair."

Jürgen Tracht, managing director of German marine federation BVWW, says that the entire industry was encouraged by the show's success. "The bottom of the curve had been reached," he says. "The visitors at the stands were eager to buy, very knowledgeable, international and also very satisfactory in terms of numbers. The well-received programme of events demonstrates that our industry has potential and that we are capable of mobilising this potential."

Tracht noted that demand for sailboats and sailing yachts was more buoyant this year, with competitive pricing giving the sector a much needed boost. The most popular segment was boats of up to 12m (39ft) in length. Demand was also very strong for small motorboats, although demand for those in the medium-sized segment was on a similar level as last year. The large yacht sector remains sluggish.

And finally, yacht charter companies and exhibitors active in the water tourism sector reported higher sales than last year, with many describing boot 2010 as the best fair for years.

Next year's boot Düsseldorf is scheduled to run from January 22-30, 2011.

(2 February 2010)