

PRESS RELEASE

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DüsseldorfCongress bucks the crisis

Annual accounts for 2009 shaping up to break several records

Notwithstanding the global economic crisis, the venue management and event organisation company DüsseldorfCongress Veranstaltungsgesellschaft continued to pursue its successful path in 2009 as one of Europe's largest providers of special event venues. According to the latest calculations, the company owned by the municipality of Düsseldorf – capital of the German state North Rhine-Westphalia – and the municipal exhibition company Messe Düsseldorf will post revenues in excess of EUR 31 million for last year from rentals, services and the assignment of rights – the highest-ever turnover in the company's history, up from EUR 26.1 million in 2008. At around EUR 550,000, pre-tax profit is similarly likely to hit an all-time high, also putting DüsseldorfCongress well above budget. Event attendance last year likewise marked a new record. Whereas in 2008 1.8 million visitors were hosted in DüsseldorfCongress properties, events in 2009 drew a total audience of more than 2.4 million. The number of events last year – comprising conferences, seminars, conventions, corporate functions, concerts and sports fixtures – added up to 2,471 in all.

Success factor: diverse and demand-robust portfolio

What made this outstanding performance possible was the strong positioning and versatility of the corporate portfolio. With its nine venues – including the CCD Congress Center Düsseldorf, the PHILIPSHALLE, the ESPRIT arena, the ISS DOME and the special event venue Station Airport – DüsseldorfCongress serves all sections of the events industry and caters for the most diverse target groups. As a result, weaknesses in individual market segments can be smoothed out, steady occupancy achieved overall and shortfalls in business earnings in any one sector compensated by another.

- CCD Congress Center Düsseldorf
- Halle 6 / Halle 8a / Halle 8b
- museum kunst palast
- Station Airport
- PHILIPSHALLE
- ESPRIT arena
- ISS DOME

DüsseldorfCongress
Veranstaltungsgesellschaft mbH

Stockumer Kirchstraße 61
40474 Düsseldorf
Germany

Phone: +49 (0) 211 / 45 60 - 84 01
Fax: +49 (0) 211 / 45 60 - 85 36
www.duesseldorfcongress.de
info@duesseldorfcongress.de

Management:
Hilmar Guckert (CEO)
Jörg Mitze
Wilfried E. Moog
Helmut Rattenhuber

Chairman of the Supervisory Board:
Heinz Winterwerber

Düsseldorf District Court HRB 31015

Bank connection:
Stadt-Sparkasse Düsseldorf
Bank code: 300 501 10
Account number: 101 178 44
IBAN DE46 3005 0110 0010 1178 44
Bank Swift Nr. DUSSEDD

Sales tax identification number:
105/5810/1372
VAT-Nr. DE 169583450

.DC Club



In addition to big scientific congresses like the central educational conference of the German Academy of Ophthalmology (AAD) with 5,000 delegates and the 25th Congress of the European Committee for Treatment and Research in Multiple Sclerosis (ECTRIMS) with 4,000 attendees, in 2009 the venue management company registered its highest number of annual general meetings so far. Two extraordinary events with an exceptionally positive impact on the company's 2009 results were the New Apostolic Church European Youth Day and football club Bayer Leverkusen's second-round home games, which were staged in Düsseldorf owing to the rebuilding of the BayArena.

But not all segments turned in growth last year. Corporate functions, for example, were heavily hit in the closing months of the year by the poor business situation. The insolvency of German retailer Arcandor obliged the CCD Congress Center Düsseldorf to write off a six-figure sum. For that, however, DüsseldorfCongress registered a strong increase in big-ticket events. "While others suffered severe losses because they serve only one market segment, we are in a position to emerge stronger even from economically critical years," says Hilmar Guckert, DüsseldorfCongress CEO, of a strategy delivering stability in times of crisis.

Success factor: flexible HR pool

Hilmar Guckert describes demand-based use of the highly qualified human resources available to DüsseldorfCongress as an important factor in the company's successful development, especially last year. "Our well-trained staff can be employed flexibly in the various venues. This means we can fully minimise the risk to jobs even when demand softens in individual markets and venues. For instance, up to four employees spent several months working exclusively on preparations for the New Apostolic Church European Youth Day."

Expansion of international activities in 2010

In the current business year the company is focusing on further internationalisation of the programme of events hosted in its venues. Where budget considerations are compelling competitors to withdraw wholly or partly from international markets, Düsseldorf-Congress is intensifying its presence.

Given the excellent environment – due primarily to Düsseldorf’s powerful position as a business location – Hilmar Guckert sees further potential here: “We are working more closely with globally operative congress and event agencies and engaging with recognised industry associations for the purpose of better networking Düsseldorf internationally as an event destination, specifically attracting event organisers to Düsseldorf and generating further top-notch congresses, conferences and events for North Rhine-Westphalia’s capital city.”

In April 2010, for instance, the European Association of Event Centres, EVVC, will be holding its annual general assembly in Düsseldorf. And DüsseldorfCongress recently won the contract for the February 2011 European Meetings and Events Conference of the association Meeting Professionals International (MPI), the event industry’s biggest congress in Europe.

Further information and your direct contact

For further information on DüsseldorfCongress Veranstaltungsgesellschaft visit www.duesseldorfcongress.de.

Your contact partner for further questions:

DüsseldorfCongress Veranstaltungsgesellschaft mbH

Kerstin Bosshammer – Manager Public Relations

Tel.: +49 (0)211 / 45 60 - 84 93 – Fax: +49 (0)211 / 45 60 - 87 84 93

E-Mail: BosshammerK@duesseldorfcongress.de

www.duesseldorfcongress.de