

## EXHIBITIONS AND THE ECONOMICS OF EXPERIENCE

First appointment to open the 2007-2008 exhibition year, companies and authorities exchange views.  
Roth: we will succeed in innovating exhibitions

Milan, 10 September 2007 – In Italy there is a healthy, farsighted and stimulating «neo-capitalism». This is where exhibitions are a “tool” and -- by adopting a new form and contents and in their role as a place and event for experience and representation – they can become a driving force for the development and competitiveness on the global market.

This is one of the main points that emerged from the conference on The economics of experience. Putting exhibitions to the test in the global market, held today during the inauguration of the 2007-2008 exhibition year promoted by Fondazione Fiera Milano and Fiera Milano Spa. It is the first in a series of annual appointments that aims to determine the state of health of Italian business and trade from an exclusive vantage point.

During the past year, the pavilions at Fieramilano hosted 88 exhibitions (for a total of more than 2 million net square meters sold), almost 6 million visitors and 32,400 exhibitors, of whom more than 25,000 from Italy. Among these, in the sectors that are more typically Made in Italy, there were 5,235 companies from the fashion industry, 8,086 technology and machine-building companies and 1,839 companies from the design-furniture industry.

These figures reflect the vitality of the “exhibition” tool, which is successfully standing the test of globalization and the numerous opportunities offered by the web, because of its ability to establish relations and track record . Yet, as Fondazione Fiera Milano CEO Luigi Roth pointed out, a transformation and renewal effort is required all along the line; for this reason, over the past months, the future of exhibition tool was addressed in a number of meetings with leading small- and medium-sized companies from Milan, Treviso, Bari, Florence and Ancona. These appointments confirmed the extraordinary vitality of «Italian neo-capitalism », which needs the right tools and support in order to be competitive.

The conference opened with a speech by Lombardy Regional Government President Roberto Formigoni and a welcome address by Provincial Councillor for Economic Activity Ezio Casati and the mayors of Rho and Pero, Roberto Zucchetti and Luciano Maneggia, and was divided into two sessions. The final comments were entrusted to Roberto Pinza, Deputy Minister for the Economy and Finance.

During the first session, The opening of markets: the new structure of trade, Mario Baldassarri, an economist and Italian senator, referred to the realignment of exchange rates and the driving force of domestic demand in China and Europe as being a solution to creating a balance in the world economy in financial terms, but also as being the best solution for all continents. Other speakers included the coordinator of the exhibition sector for the Autonomous Regions and Provinces Conference Duccio Campagnoli, Banca Popolare di Milano CEO Roberto Mazzotta, and Ermete Realacci, the CEO of Symbola-Fondazione per le Qualità italiane.

According to Aldo Bonomi, sociologist and director of Consorzio A.a.ster, who introduced the second session The Exhibition Tool: Upstream or downstream of the production system? the success of exhibitions is based on the quality of networks, logistics, universities, communications, reception facilities and as a result, on the need for exhibitions to strengthen their positioning as independent entities that promote the implementation of this system to create competitive companies. From this point of view Fiera Milano must evolve with the Italian production system by promoting and organizing more communications and exchanges with the end user-customer.

Fiera Milano Spa Managing Director Claudio Artusi accepted the challenge: we are aware of the fact that the added value that Fiera Milano can, and must offer companies is more focused on communication, image, reputation as well as on an international reach and territorial integration, and not only on offering exhibition spaces and services. This new value is built by working with companies, creating a network with other exhibition authorities in Italy and renewing the same approach to the exhibition tool: from service to experience, from product to stage.

The members of the round table session were Genitum CEO Laura Iris Ferro, Enel CEO, Piero Gnudi, Fastweb CEO Stefano Parisi, Coca Cola HBC Italia CEO Dario Rinero, Autogrill CEO Gianmario Tondato da Ruos, Pirelli & C. CEO Marco Tronchetti Provera, and CEO of the Union of International Exhibitions Jochen Witt.

The conference was also an opportunity to highlight the role of Fiera Milano in Milan's bid to host EXPO 2015: in fact, the area at Rho-Pero will be part of an enhancement project involving approx. 500,000 square meters owned by Fondazione Fiera Milano, as well as Pavilions 1 and 2 and the 60,000 square meters of outdoor exhibition space.

The opening of the 2007-2008 exhibition year began last evening at Fieramilano Rho with a party that was attended by more than 800 guests.



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