

Munich, 2/26/2017  
**Pressemitteilung**

## **Final Report**

### **f.re.e 2017 Comes to an End with a Record Result**

- **New record with 135,000 visitors**
- **f.re.e bigger than ever with second caravanning hall**
- **Partner Country 2018: Malta**

Felix Kirschenbauer  
Tel. +49 89 949-21472  
Fax +49 89 949-9721472  
[felix.kirschenbauer@messe-muenchen.de](mailto:felix.kirschenbauer@messe-muenchen.de)

In the five days of the trade fair, 135,000 visitors obtained information about innovations and trends for planning their vacations and recreation time. Visitor satisfaction surpassed the record set in the previous year. This also created a high level of satisfaction among exhibitors in all topic areas. Overall, more than 1,300 companies from 65 countries presented their vacation offers and recreation products.

Trade fair CEO Reinhard Pfeiffer emphasized the high satisfaction of exhibitors: "Not only the record number of visitors was convincing, but also the fact that a lot of money was spent for vacations, leisure time, motor homes and caravans. This is certainly thanks to the current economic situation, but also the great offers from our exhibitors."

Bavarian Economics and Tourism Minister Ilse Aigner stressed the importance of the event during her tour of the show: "With the travel and recreation trade fair f.re.e, we have an excellent platform to present Bavaria's extensive offers effectively. Bavaria is the number one tourist destination in Germany. With more than 90 million overnight stays in the Free State, 2016 was again a record year. However, the fair is also very popular with other national and international travel agencies thanks to the willingness to travel and the purchasing power of people from Bavaria."

The Munich Car Days were held within the context of f.re.e for the sixth time and for the tenth time overall. The success story of this is continuing, as organizer Andrea Schaller-Öller from Münchener Zeitungs-Verlag reported: "At the 10th

Messe München GmbH  
Messegelände  
81823 München  
Deutschland  
[www.messe-muenchen.de](http://www.messe-muenchen.de)



Press Release | 2/26/2017 | 2/2

Munich Car Days, the unique trade fair concept to compare numerous car makes in one place and test drive them was again very well received. In addition, dealers were able to sell a large number of vehicles."

The Munich Golf Days had an excellent debut on the trade fair grounds from Friday to Sunday. Ingo Klover, Managing Director of Planet Fair, drew a positive balance: "The extended range and the new site was warmly welcomed by exhibitors and visitors. Renowned new exhibitors have already announced their participation for next year."

Barbara Müller, Project Manager of f.re.e, is delighted with the successful result of the partner events: "We provide our visitors with an optimum enhancement to the extensive travel and leisure time offer of f.re.e with the Munich Car Days and Golf Days." The visitor figures show clearly that this concept has received wide acceptance."

### **Travel**

At f.re.e, this year's partner country Egypt showed its extensive travel and recreational activities such as diving and kite surfing on the Red Sea and culture offers from Cairo to Luxor to the Valley of the Kings. Mohammed Abdel Gabbar, Director of the Tourist Office Egypt in Germany, looks back positively at f.re.e: "We are very satisfied with the trade fair and also certain that our exhibition will take us a step further in attracting even more tourists to Egypt this year."

More Germans than ever spent their vacations in their own country last year. The high demand was also noticeable at f.re.e. In a survey, more than a third of visitors stated that they were interested in offers in Bavaria and Germany. Consequently, Thomas Dachs, Exhibition Manager of the Tourism Association of Eastern Bavaria, is very satisfied: f.re.e 2017 was a complete success for us! Interest in excursion and recreational opportunities in Eastern Bavaria and especially the Bavarian Forest is enormous. In addition, our hiking, wellness and cycling offers were very well received."

Almost half of the visitors were looking for information about vacation destinations around the Mediterranean. Among others, Peter Cauchi, Director of the Malta Tourism Authority, is profiting from this enthusiasm: "f.re.e was again a

Press Release | 2/26/2017 | 3/3

great success for us, and we were able to present the diversity of Malta to the visitors from Munich and Bavaria in general. We are really looking forward to be the partner country of f.re.e next year when Valletta will be the European Capital of Culture."

Cruises remain very fashionable. For this reason, f.re.e again increased the size of exhibition area "f.re.e Ahoy" this year with offers for traveling on water. This increases the attraction for both visitors and exhibitors, as Berthold Allendorf, Managing Director of Zughansa, stated: "f.re.e is a win-win situation for Zughansa. We reach our target group and get orders from them; in addition, we can fire their enthusiasm with interesting talks. We were able to provide customer care and acquire new customers in personal conversations and talks in an optimal way."

### **Caravanning & Mobile Leisure**

The continuing positive trend in the caravanning industry was also reflected at f.re.e. The area for Caravanning & Mobile Recreation was expanded to two complete halls, corresponding to an area of two football fields. Visitor interest in mobile homes, caravans and tents has again increased according to a survey, as Gerhard Romer, proprietor of Slomotion Germany confirmed: "We were at f.re.e for the first time, and our expectations were exceeded by a great margin. From the first day, knowledgeable visitors demonstrated substantial interest in our products. Our dealers were able to sell a wide range of vehicles and consequently also drew a very positive balance."

In addition, 93 percent of the visitors surveyed rated the offering in the field Caravanning & Mobile Recreation as excellent, very good or good. With some 300 vehicles, the exhibitors presented more caravans and motor homes than ever before. Marie Theresa Gerard, Managing Director of Wohnwagen Gerard, explained the step to increase the area of their own booth significantly: "f.re.e is our biggest promotion campaign. Consequently, the fair is very important for presenting our brand. We had many good discussions and noticed very high quality among the visitors. The tenfold increase our booth was exactly the right decision."

Press Release | 2/26/2017 | 4/4

In the Camping World, visitors had the opportunity to gain a comprehensive picture of the very varied tent offers. Michael House, Doréma Vorzelte CEO, assessed the development as very positive: "f.re.e has been able to increase its importance for the camping industry in recent years and is exactly on the right path with its activities."

### **Bicycles**

The enthusiasm when it comes to bicycles reached another record level. Almost half of those surveyed specifically visited hall B6, and 95 percent rated the range of trekking, mountain, e-bikes and equipment as well as bicycle tours as excellent, very good or good. For Christian Unangst, Sales Representative at Kreidler, f.re.e was a complete success: "f.re.e is a great chance for us to present the brand Kreidler optimally and become more well-known among customers. With the help of test rides on the bike course, we were able to win numerous new customers."

In addition to other manufacturers such as Hercules, Kettler and MyStromer, numerous dealers presented nearly 60 bicycle brands. How big the interest of visitors is for bicycles was also demonstrated to Andreas Weigl, Marketing Manager at the Bavarian e-bike manufacturer Corratec: "It was our first time as an exhibitor at f.re.e this year. The results are very positive. We were able to sell approximately 160 e-bikes via our dealers in the first few days thanks to this trade fair. This is definitely a great success."

### **Water Sports**

The travel and recreation trade fair f.re.e extended its range of action areas in the topic area of water sports by a lake-landscape. In two separate lakes, visitors had the opportunity to test both the latest stand-up paddling boards and canoe models on site. Guido Meier, Managing Director of Bavarianwaters, is full of enthusiasm for the implementation: "On the new lake, visitors could directly make their first stand-up paddling tests on water, so that they will be motivated to

Press Release | 2/26/2017 | 5/5

try that out on a real lake at our company later. Visitors very quickly found a liking for stand-up paddling at f.re.e."

Christian Krzywicki from Beyond Diving was very pleased with the great interest in the trial scuba diving and snorkeling offers: "Despite the good weather, we recorded very many customers at our booth as well as for the trial diving courses. Snorkeling is becoming increasingly interesting for the visitors, since people can try it out without great diving knowledge during a seaside vacation."

### **Outdoor**

With nearby mountains, outdoor is one of the most popular recreational areas of visitors at f.re.e. In addition, CLIMB FREE was held on Saturday and Sunday for already the ninth time. Patricia Ebenberger, from the managing board of the German Alpine Club Munich and Oberland, is very pleased with the fair result: "For us, the f.re.e is a great chance to get into contact with outdoor-loving, active visitors to present our offer and ideally recruit them as new members."

The European Outdoor Film Tour made a stop at f.re.e on Saturday evening. Visitors had the opportunity to see clips and videos by mountain climbers, mountain bikers and wingsuit flyers in a 90-minute special presentation.

### **Health & Wellness**

The Health & Wellness area had the right offer for every need this year from fitness exercises in the exercise scene to wellness offers for at home. For Klaus Denninger, Managing Director of Aloe Vera Service, exhibition at f.re.e is mandatory: "While many fairs continue to stagnate or even decline, we look forward to f.re.e every year. Thanks to the great organization, the trade fair is growing further, and increasing visitor numbers and sales are guaranteed us every year."

The next travel and recreation fair f.re.e will take place on the grounds of Messe München from February 21 to 25, 2018.

### **Additional information:**

[www.free-muenchen.de](http://www.free-muenchen.de)