

No. 15/e
Munich, May 04, 2016
Press Release

50 years of IFAT

What was it like back in 1966?

IFAT, which takes place from May 30 to June 3, 2016 at the Messe München exhibition center, is celebrating its 50th birthday. It started out back in 1966, as the “International Trade Fair for Sewage Technology”. Taking part in that premiere were 147 exhibitors from nine countries, and 10,200 visitors from 40 countries—and the exhibition space was 18,000 square meters. Of course everything was much smaller than today, and quite different, as we heard from four people who experienced those early days.

For example Professor Dr.-Ing.E.h. **Hermann H. Hahn** PhD, who remembers very well what the situation was like in the 1960s: “The first IFAT took place at a time when the word ‘environment’ was not on everybody’s lips like it is today. But this trade fair played its part in raising awareness about the global nature of these challenges.” Professor Hahn is still enthusiastic about that premiere: “For the first time I saw that what I had studied at Harvard University could be of worldwide interest, and gather together an international trade audience from science and engineering.”

Certainly such an event was urgently needed, as recalls **Horst J. Schumacher**, publisher and editor of *Kommunalwirtschaft*, a magazine for municipal services and authorities: “Right up until the 1960s there was no trade fair dedicated to the theme of water and wastewater. When attention finally did focus on it, many were surprised, and even shocked at the condition of the water pipes and sewers. Then Messe München came up with the idea of starting IFAT.”

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That idea turned into a 50-year success story. **Tom Kallmann**, at the time the representative of Messe München in the US, comments: “All I can say is: ‘*res ipsa loquitur*’ – it speaks for itself. The concept behind IFAT, which has been continually developed over the years and adapted to the needs of the environmental technology sector, shows that the people behind this event were very forward-thinking and visionary.” **Manfred Fischer**, who experienced the 1966 premiere as a young construction engineer with two years professional experience, adds: “The development of IFAT over these 50 years is amazing. Back then the visitors to the show were mostly a small family of German wastewater engineers. But today the participants come from all over the world.” Fischer himself still enjoys coming to the show: “I have indeed attended all 18 of the past editions of IFAT. It’s just a shame that the next one is only the 19th, so not a ‘round’ number, to match the 50-year anniversary.”

But nobody will be worrying about that little flaw, when over 3,000 exhibitors and 135,000 visitors converge on Munich to take part in the 50th birthday edition of IFAT.

Accreditation for IFAT 2016

To accredit yourself for IFAT 2016 please use our online accreditation [here](#).

Display of Trade Magazines at IFAT 2016

Information about displaying your magazine at the trade press stand or in the trade press boxes you will find [here](#).

Further information: www.ifat.de

IFAT

IFAT is the world’s leading trade event for environmental technology. A total of 3,081 exhibitors from 59 countries, and 135,288 visitors from 168 countries took part in the last event. IFAT is held every two years; the next edition takes place from May 30 to June 3, 2016 in Munich.

IFAT worldwide

Messe München’s competence in organizing environmental-technology events is demonstrated not only in the world’s leading trade fair for the sector, IFAT, but also in a

range of other international trade exhibitions around the world. The spectrum encompasses IFAT Africa in Johannesburg, IFAT Eurasia in Istanbul, IFAT India in Mumbai, and IE expo in Shanghai. With IE expo Guangzhou there is now also a regional edition of the trade fair, focusing on the market in South China.

Messe München

Messe München is one of the world's leading trade-show companies. It organizes some 40 trade shows for capital and consumer goods and key high-tech industries in Munich and abroad. Each year more than 30,000 exhibitors and some two million visitors take part in events held at the Messe München trade-fair center, the ICM – Internationales Congress Center München and the MOC Veranstaltungszentrum München. In addition, Messe München organizes trade shows in China, India, Turkey, South Africa and Russia. Messe München has a global business presence with affiliates in Europe, Asia and Africa and more than 60 foreign representatives serving more than 100 countries.