



PAPERWORLD REVIEW

Over 69,000 trade visitors from 115 countries makes Paperworld No.1 for the stationery trade.

BY JANE SMITH

Paperworld 2004 saw record numbers of visitors with a 4% increase over 2003 figures. Over 69,000 trade visitors from 115 countries made it to the fair, making this the No. 1 venue for the stationery industry in Western Europe. As one might expect the top five foreign visitor nations were Italy, France, Great Britain, The Netherlands and Belgium. But, maybe a little surprising, was that in sixth place with a massive 40% increase in numbers came the USA, one of the world's most important markets.

Of particular success this year was the Imaging sector, showing at the event for the second year, with big names like Lexmark, Fuji, HP and others all giving the 'thumbs up', highly satisfied with the number and quality of visitors. With computer supplies, imaging, paper and general stationery sectors merging from the resellers point of view, it makes sense to showcase all of it together under one roof.

Top marks

According to the organisers, altogether more than two thirds of the 2518 exhibitors said they are satisfied with Paperworld 2004 and on the visitor side the percentage awarding the event top marks reached almost 95%. Given that two thirds of all visitors are also senior managers, it does clearly support the view that this is a quality event. The mood of the visitors was said to be restrained but positive, indicating that

expectations for the industry's performance was overall good. Another widely shared view was that the fair had developed to become a concept and contact event with price negotiations and order taking becoming very much secondary.

So what main themes were there in terms of products. Comfort was an important trend and theme at Paperworld 2004. Using technology intelligently with well thought-out solutions to make office life more comfortable and tasks easier. Ergonomics and space efficiency were also high on the agenda. In the writing instruments sector 'comfort' was all about elaborate grip zones and smooth flowing pigmented ink and a clear trend towards the premium end of the market.

In the imaging area specialist papers were to be seen everywhere. Photo paper and specialist inkjet and laser papers are all enjoying high rates of growth whilst in the consumables product area the emphasis was on quality, performance and environmental aspects.

New new new

In terms of new products, most exhibitors had something new to show – far too many to list them all but the couple that are worthy of a specific mention were:

Digital Pads! A new concept being worked on by John Dickinson Stationery in conjunction with Logitech. Use the pad to write

out your message (neatly, of course) using a Logitech or Nokia pen, then simply upload your message into your phone. Wow how cool is that – especially if you hate using traditional text (or should we say txt ?).

Durable's new key cabinet won the ISPA award 2004. How does such a traditional product warrant an industry award. Well you only have to look at it to know why. It's well-designed and funky!

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Other new products included 3M's Post-it Super Sticky Notes, claiming to stick to even the most difficult surfaces such as metal and glass. Avery's new Personal Label Writer is an alternative to Esselte's Dymo range. Dahle's new and unique adjustable flipchart easel – no need to waste the bottom half of the flipchart pad because it's too low – simply lift it to a comfortable position and Tarifold's new range of top notch polypropylene filing products.

Finally we observed an unprecedented rise in the number of shredder machines on display at the show. A sure sign that demand for this product group is set to boom in the coming year. See the lead feature on information theft in this issue. ■