

In Frankfurt at the end of January in 11 separate halls, Paperworld 2005 is expected to draw more than the 68,500 visitors who attended last year to see 2,500 exhibitors.

THE BIGGEST SHOW ON EARTH!

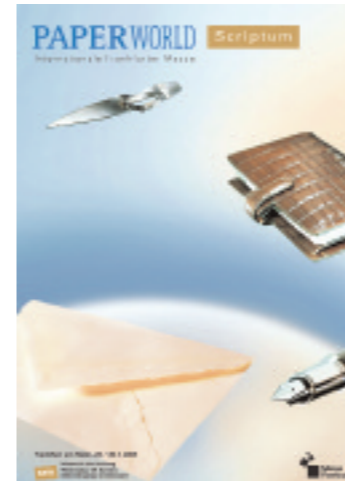
BY JANE SMITH

While many of you will be busy distributing your 2005 catalogues and preparing for the year ahead, a good number of your merchandising and marketing colleagues will be heading out to Frankfurt to join the other 68,000 plus people swarming to see the 'latest and greatest' in the world of office products. Rather like the fashion industry, it is now that the trends are set for the following year and where manufacturers and distributors will be showcasing new products hoping to influence product selection for the 2006 catalogues.

This year Paperworld is revamping its format to increase international trade and will be held 26-30 January. The exhibition is set out in a total of 11 separate halls and having walked them all myself in the past, flat

shoes are definitely a prerequisite! Without any doubt, Paperworld is now recognised as 'the trade fair for the office products industry'. Not only is the fair renowned for setting new trends and unveiling new products that will shape product selection for the main UK catalogues for 2006, it is also a place to see new entrants to the industry, particularly lesser known ones from overseas. There's usually a whole hall full!

As well as traditional office products exhibitors (and the 'new boys on the block') Office Equipment Manufacturers for IT and printer supplies companies are also present in their own 'Imaging' section. This means that as a buyer or marketer it is possible to cover the entire office products spectrum at one show.



It is a fantastic opportunity for networking, both for manufacturers and resellers. Gaining the maximum benefit is hard work though. Appointments are being set at this very moment and, for the serious visitor, the show will entail back-to-back meetings with exhibitors for the best part of three days, leaving one day free to browse other parts of the exhibition to gain ideas and possibly find new sources of supply. For exhibitors it's smile, smile and smile some more. For four full days, they'll be on their feet and on their best behaviour, welcoming visitors, discussing opportunities and, above all, maximising the opportunity to SELL with every appointment and casual conversation.

And if that weren't exhausting enough there's also the opportunity to network all evening too with many manufacturers organising special events.

Perhaps the highlight of the evening's proceedings is The European Office Products Awards, organised by OPI in cooperation with Messe Frankfurt. Rewarding excellence in office products, this will be a glitzy, ritzy affair on the evening of 28 January. Now part of the annual Paperworld Exhibition, these awards are the most prestigious in the industry on a European level and recognition of having achieved the highest of standards. More information is available at www.officeproductsawards.com

SO, WHAT SPECIFICALLY WILL PAPERWORLD BE ABOUT IN 2005?

Well, yet again visitor numbers are expected to exceed those of previous years and it is hoped that the new, earlier timing of the show will boost numbers particularly from further afield.

As well as all the exhibitors, there will be The Trend Show staged by the Dutch trend expert Gunner Frank. There will be three areas:

- **TREND NOBLESSE** – Paper sheets with high-grade, smooth or finely structured surfaces, silk texture visuals, translucent paper, writing tools with semi-precious stone effects and fretwork.
- **TREND TECHNOFORM** – Natural visuals such as leather, crocodile skin, snakeskin, bamboo, classic jacquard effects, computers, printers, office accessories – functional and in decorative metallic shades.
- **TRAND ARTESANIA** – The needs of an artist for natural and artificial materials to

model, craft and create with.

It seems strange, but our world of stationery is beginning to keep pace with other consumer product led industries such as home furnishings, clothes and food. Whilst there will always be those who focus on cost, there are also plenty of consumers looking for something else. Be it the 'you get what you pay for' type or the 'if it's new I have to be first', or the fashion conscious, these are the people that will boost your margin if you can find them. So, while some of the ideas on offer at the show will seem far removed from the reality of day to day business, if history repeats itself they will come into being. You only have to look back at the trends predicted at the 2004 Paperworld show, which were for undiluted nostalgia, with soft colours and fine patterns.

The organisers are optimistic that 2005 will be a bumper success.

'Fresher, younger and even more dynamic – Paperworld is preparing itself for the future'

For more information about the show you can visit the website

www.paperworld.messefrankfurt.com

The world's largest international office products trade fair is set to begin on 26 January. Advance tickets for the show are available.

And finally, don't forget that in the true efficient style of the Germans, your show ticket can be used free on public transport to and

