

## Texcare 2021: “The sector wants personal encounters”

**In around nine months, exhibitors, visitors and representatives of the media will get together at Texcare International in Frankfurt am Main from 27 November to 1 December 2021. In our interview, Johannes Schmid-Wiedersheim, Director of Texcare International, discusses the current booking status of the leading trade fair, the challenges facing the sector and the yearning for personal encounters.**

**Mr Schmid-Wiedersheim, the early-booking phase for exhibitors ended on 29 January. What is the current planning status?**

**Johannes Schmid-Wiedersheim:** “Even we were surprised to see that more companies had registered before the end of the early-booking phase than at the same point in time before the postponed Texcare 2020. Hence, I can say that the most important companies from all textile-care product groups will be making presentations here again. This is a great result and gives us solid ground for optimism. Also, I think it shows how much the sector wants personal encounters and an international exchange of ideas and information. There is a great desire among companies to meet good business partners again, to see technology in operation, to orientate themselves as a branch of industry and look to the future. And, of course, companies that have been hit by the crisis are hoping for solid impulses for their business at a time when we are now hopefully gaining the upper hand on the corona pandemic.”

**What is the mood in the sector from your point of view? What response have you had to Texcare International?**

**Johannes Schmid-Wiedersheim:** “We see it reflected from all sides: 2020 was an extremely challenging year for the sector. The problems caused by the Covid-19 virus were great everywhere and led to some dramatic scenes in certain companies. The slumps, especially in tourism, the hospitality sector and the private customer business, have been huge. And things are no different in the fair and exhibition business. Although it is not clear how long it will take until a semblance of normality returns and which trends will survive the crisis for any length of time, we do have the perspective of a significant upswing when the pandemic is over. Despite short-time working, the turnover with workwear has declined somewhat less in many laundries. This also applies to flat linen for hospitals and care facilities where admission stops and the postponement of elective operations has had an impact. At the same time, hygiene, supply certainty and sustainability in relation to the textile recycling economy have gained in importance so that, in the final analysis, the expertise and the experience of textile-service providers is going to be more in demand than ever before.”

## **What are the next steps until Texcare International?**

**Johannes Schmid-Wiedersheim:** "Postponing Texcare has changed things somewhat. We are beginning with the exhibition-stand planning later than usual because the authorities have not yet issued the exact regulations for holding safe events in the late autumn. Nevertheless, we have prepared for several different scenarios and will undoubtedly be able to do everything necessary at that point in time. Moreover, admission control, visitor registration, enormous room volumes and high air-exchange rates are already features of events in Frankfurt and things such as spacing and the use of tests can be implemented without difficulty.

At present, we are focusing primarily on the Texcare International programme of events, the pivotal point of which is the Texcare Forum, for which we are working on together with our partners, The German Dry Cleaning Association and VDMA Textile Care, Fabric and Leather Technologies. Naturally, one of the focal points is subjects that have gained momentum throughout the pandemic, such as digitalisation, new-business development, hygiene and sustainability. For my part, I am very interested to see how we look back on this time in a few years. I am sure that we will see numerous positive changes and how the creative ideas currently being developed will have a lasting impact on the sector.

To support the additional innovative thrust being generated by newcomers to the sector, we have decided to promote young companies with the introduction of a special start-up package at Texcare International. Other events on the programme include the World Textile Services Congress, which will be held during and after Texcare on 1 and 2 December 2021, the Cinet Best Practices Awards on the first day of the fair and a special programme for young professionals."

**If everything works out, the travel situation will be almost back to normal by November 2021. However, it is at the moment difficult to say exactly how normal this will be. What are you doing for visitors who cannot travel to Frankfurt for Texcare?**

**Johannes Schmid-Wiedersheim:** "We firmly believe that travel and business activities within Europe, as well as with other commercial partners, will be largely possible by the end of November. Despite the extraordinary circumstances, it is important to take a positive view of the future and not just do nothing. Last time, European visitors to Texcare accounted for 80 percent of the total and this has always been so. The number of visitors from further afield will depend primarily on the vaccination situation and, in this case, too, many countries around the world are making good progress on inoculating their citizens.

If we take a global view and consider our other textile-care trade fairs, a certain continental focus is to be expected in the immediate future. For example, Texcare Asia & China Laundry Expo worked very well for the Chinese market last autumn and this development is very likely to continue with the Clean Show 2022 for the continent of America.

Naturally, we want Texcare to retain its character as the leading international trade fair for the sector and we are therefore working flat out on concepts that will enable overseas visitors to attend the fair on a purely digital basis. Very important in this connection is that we succeed in communicating the innovative nature of the fair.

## **But what if the epidemiologic conditions mean the fair has to be cancelled?**

**Johannes Schmid-Wiedersheim:** “Unfortunately, nobody has a crystal ball that can accurately predict what is going to happen. We are in constant contact with the sector and will find a solution for such a situation. Nevertheless, two things are certain: firstly, textiles have to be cleaned and laundered, and we want to be the sector’s partner to facilitate live interaction. And, secondly, digital events cannot replace people’s desire for personal encounters. The past year has left no doubt about this. Accordingly, my team and I are working hard on making safe personal encounters possible for the sector. And I am looking forward to welcoming exhibitors and visitors to Frankfurt for Texcare International. Until then: stay healthy and, above all, hopeful.”



Johannes Schmid-Wiedersheim, Director, Texcare International  
Source: Messe Frankfurt

In addition to Texcare International, Messe Frankfurt organises trade fairs and conferences for textile care in all major economic regions of the world.  
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**Contact:**

Susanne Brendle

Tel.: +49 69 75 75-6457

[Susanne.Brendle@messefrankfurt.com](mailto:Susanne.Brendle@messefrankfurt.com)

Messe Frankfurt Exhibition GmbH

Ludwig-Erhard-Anlage 1

60327 Frankfurt am Main

[www.messefrankfurt.com](http://www.messefrankfurt.com)

**Background information on Messe Frankfurt**

Messe Frankfurt is the world's largest trade fair, congress and event organiser with its own exhibition grounds. The Messe Frankfurt Group employs around 2,500\* people in a total of 30 subsidiaries. The company generated annual sales of approximately €250\* million in 2020. Even in difficult times caused by the coronavirus pandemic, we are globally networked with our industry sectors. We have close ties with our industry sectors and serve our customers' business interests efficiently within the framework of our Fairs & Events, Locations and Services business fields. One of the Group's key USPs is its closely knit global sales network, which extends throughout the world. Our comprehensive range of services – both onsite and online – ensures that customers worldwide enjoy consistently high quality and flexibility when planning, organising and running their events. We are expanding our digital expertise with new business models. The wide range of services includes renting exhibition grounds, trade fair construction and marketing, personnel and food services. Headquartered in Frankfurt am Main, the company is owned by the City of Frankfurt (60 percent) and the State of Hesse (40 percent).

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\* preliminary figures 2020