



INTERNATIONALE FACHMESSE
MIT KONGRESS
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A+A 2021 – Interview with Birgit Horn, Project Director A+A and Markus Leuker, Director Occupational Safety and Health

At last, A+A is back! And on site in Düsseldorf. Messe Düsseldorf's hygiene and infection control concept makes it possible. Recovered, vaccinated or tested checks, high-performance ventilation systems and spacious design of exhibition halls, distance markings and many other measures all ensure the event can go ahead. As a result, over 1,000 exhibitors will once again be able to meet many visitors from Germany and Europe at Düsseldorf Exhibition Center from October 26 to 29, 2021. Markus Leuker, Head of the Safety and Occupational Health Department at Messe Düsseldorf, explains how the concept works, in conversation with Birgit Horn, A+A Project Director.

B. Horn: Dear Markus, we are well prepared as far as A+A 2021 is concerned, also thanks to you and the work you've done, the numerous colleagues from the field of occupational safety and those colleagues involved in creating the materials, such as the videos, the FAQs and short factsheets. Despite these measures, we continue to receive individual inquiries regarding the various trade show formats.

M. Leuker: Thank you Birgit. In the end, what counts is the success of a trade show like A+A. And in the meantime, this also includes a hygiene and infection control concept adapted for trade fairs. We are all doing our best here together. I will be very happy to help answer any questions that may arise.

B. Horn: How many visitors is the trade show limited to?

M. Leuker: A+A 2021 will allow a maximum of 22,000 people on the grounds at any one time. This means that a total of 88,000 people would have the opportunity to experience the trade show, either as visitors, exhibitors or service employees over the four days of the event.

B. Horn: How can I reach the trade fair?

M. Leuker: Travel to the trade fair will be by private car and public transport. Depending on the expected arrival behavior, supplementary means of transport will be used in consultation with Rheinbahn as the operator of the public transport system, and the frequency of connections will be increased as necessary. As an additional measure, the arrival traffic to the events will be diverted from commuter and rush-hour traffic by adjusting the event times to earlier/later opening hours.

Messe Düsseldorf will distribute visitors from the parking lots to the entrances via buses as before. The buses will be operated in accordance with the hygiene requirements of public transport.

Boarding will not begin until after disembarkation. Disembarking passengers will pass waiting passengers at a distance of at least 1.5 meters.



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Mitgliedschaften der
Messe Düsseldorf:

 The global
Association of the
Exhibition Industry

 Ausstellungs- und
Messe-Ausschuss der
Deutschen Wirtschaft

 FKM – Gesellschaft zur
Freiwilligen Kontrolle von
Messe- und Ausstellungszahlen

Öffentliche Verkehrsmittel:
U78, U79: Messe Ost/Stockumer Kirchstr.
Bus 722: Messe-Center Verwaltung



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At stops where space does not permit this, the bus will make a first stop in front of the stop to allow passengers to disembark. A second stop follows at the actual stopping point. This is where the regular boarding takes place.

At each vehicle stop, all vehicle doors are opened centrally for purposes of ventilation. The buses in use are cleaned regularly. In addition, the vehicles and, in particular, equipment such as bus bars and pushbuttons which passengers come into contact with are cleaned more intensively at the final stops.

Preference will be given to parking areas close to the event. Areas further away will be occupied on a secondary basis. Walking routes for pedestrians with distance information will be marked from the parking areas.

B. Horn: And who will be allowed onto the exhibition grounds?

M. Leuker: Between **Oct. 26 – Oct. 29, 2021**, only people with proof of a negative test or immunization will be allowed onto the fairgrounds. The same applies during assembly and dismantling at the exhibition grounds. There will be a daily access control to check relevant proof. Here the 3-way check applies (tested, vaccinated, recovered):

- **Tested:** Proof of a negative test result (PCR or rapid test) from an official test center that is not older than 48 h. Self-tests brought along to the event by attendees will not be accepted.
- **Vaccinated:** Digital proof of vaccination or vaccination certificate. Make sure to bring this with you. Vaccination must have been completed more than 14 days prior.
- **Recovered:** The participant can show a positive PCR test result. Testing must have occurred between 28 days and 6 months ago.

Proof of vaccination or a negative test must be carried as digital proof (Corona-Warn App or CovPass App) or as a printout with QR code. Likewise, an ID card must be carried for purposes of identification.

B. Horn: Will there be test centers? And, where are they? Do I have to register in advance or do I just go there?

M. Leuker: No admission to the site is possible without the aforementioned proof. Any tests that may be required can be carried out for a fee at a test center at Congress Center Düsseldorf (CCD) South or at the North Entrance. Visitors should note that we anticipate a high level of demand during the trade show, combined with long waiting times. In order to avoid these and to guarantee yourself as much time as possible at A+A, we strongly recommend that you take advantage of the testing facilities at your respective place of residence or in the city of Düsseldorf before you arrive. <https://corona.duesseldorf.de/schnelltest#>

Exhibitors can contact the operator directly if they wish to organize tests for their employees beforehand so that the operator can schedule





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corresponding slots for all A+A participants. The sooner you get in touch with the contact person, the better the planning of required capacities will be.

B. Horn: Which vaccines are accepted?

M. Leuker: All vaccines recommended by the Standing Commission on Vaccination (STIKO), the RKI and the EU's European Medicines Agency, or those which have national or EU approval, are accepted for access to the site. The Paul Ehrlich Institute publishes a current list <https://www.pei.de/EN/medicinal-products/vaccines-human/covid-19/covid-19-node.html>

B. Horn: Is there a mask requirement in the halls?

M. Leuker: Yes, **masks are compulsory** in the halls and rooms during the exhibition. Medical masks, FFP2 or KN95/N95 masks are permitted – **no face shields/visors or cloth face coverings**. During assembly and dismantling, masks are compulsory whenever the minimum distance of 1.5 m cannot be maintained. The same applies in the outdoor area. Official **hygiene rules** such as 1.5 m distance, mouth-nose protection, sneezing etiquette and adapted greeting rituals apply throughout the exhibition grounds. **High-performance ventilation systems** and natural air flow ensure more than adequate ventilation. To avoid accumulation or distribution of virus-laden aerosols, we operate the ventilation systems with 100% outside air and increased air exchange rates. Open door systems between the halls allow contactless entry.

B. Horn: When can masks be removed?

M. Leuker: In principle, masks can be removed within the open-air exhibition space, when consuming food/drink at stands and while eating/drinking at restaurants. They may also be removed in other seating areas if a hygiene distance of 1.5 m can be maintained. Masks can be removed during assembly and dismantling, provided that the minimum distance of 1.5 m can be maintained.

B. Horn: What is the policy for those with health conditions exempting them from mask wearing?

M. Leuker: In principle, those at Düsseldorf Exhibition Center producing a medical certificate to this effect are exempted from mask wearing. This certificate must be carried during the event and presented on request. However, you cannot entirely dispense with face coverings: instead, you must wear a full-face visor that covers your entire face and is closed at the forehead. No variant of the commercially available half-face visors is permitted!). No other persons may use them either.

B. Horn: How many persons are allowed in a hall?

M. Leuker: Our concept is based on the state guidelines and a very conservative, i.e. cautiously estimated, counter check. It has therefore not become necessary to measure individual halls exactly. We therefore





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have leeway to allow for normal fluctuations in attendance. The vital key here is to have sufficient space to be able to maintain the required social distancing measures beyond any waivers to distancing restrictions. In practice, this means that we will be able to estimate the number of people without jeopardizing required safety levels. We will therefore monitor operations in terms of technology and personnel and take relevant measures as required.

B. Horn: Is there a one-way system?

M. Leuker: Floor markings ensure a routing similar to that in road traffic. All doorways along the route are left open, unless they are fire doors, and can be passed through without contact. Access is granted via the right-hand half of the door system, and exit is via the opposite half of the door.

B. Horn: What measures is Messe Düsseldorf taking to prevent crowding (in the halls)?

M. Leuker: Wherever queues form – including at entrances, in front of service counters, elevators, etc. – floor markings remind people to observe social distancing. Here and in all general areas, Messe Düsseldorf staff and members of the security team ensure that this distance is observed. This is done on site and via existing video monitoring systems.

B. Horn: How is observance the 1.5m social distancing rule monitored?

M. Leuker: On the one hand, independently by the stand personnel and by our Corona Guides, who will be on the move in the halls and on the grounds. They will kindly draw the attention of the A+A participants to the applicable rules as soon as they notice anything.

B. Horn: People often ask how many visitors are allowed on a stand at any one time? Could you explain our definition of the one person/4m² rule here again?

M. Leuker: Messe Düsseldorf does not specify a maximum number of people for stands. The key factor here is that people present are able to maintain a minimum distance of 1.5 m from each other. The more freely accessible an area is, the more visitors are allowed access to the stand. This results in the requirement of one person per 4 square meters of freely accessible area. In addition, social distancing can be reduced when deploying partitions such as transparent partitions or walls.

B. Horn: For example, is an area with tables also "freely accessible"?

M. Leuker: Yes.

B. Horn: Do exhibitors themselves have to limit the number of people on a stand – and if so, how exactly?

M. Leuker: Exhibitors are responsible for ensuring that all hygiene and infection control standards are implemented on the stands and that all visitors and staff maintain the minimum distance of 1.50 meters from each





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other. The more free space there is, the more visitors will be able to access the booth while adhering to the distancing rules. In addition, they must offer visitors hand sanitizer and, if necessary, protective masks covering both mouth and nose.

B. Horn: Is the booth termed a workplace or what do we base booth specifications on?

M. Leuker: Even before Corona, the issue of applicable rules already arose. The answer remains unchanged – it is both a workplace and an event location. Employees on the stands have a right to adequate protection while they work, i.e. according to the rules of occupational health and safety. Event law and now the Corona Protection Ordinance come on top of this and are generally more far-reaching. The exhibitor is therefore also required as an employer. The framework conditions we have described take into account general operations. Depending on the type of stand and their operation, exhibitors must provide protective measures for the hazards they create. This often applies to demo operations of exhibits, which may have to dispense with standard protective equipment, even for demonstration purposes. The requirements here can be very far-reaching and are highly dependent on the decisions taken by the operator/exhibitor. We provide a framework and monitor operations.

B. Horn: Can I offer catering and what must I be aware of here?

M. Leuker: For simple catering during conversation at trade show booths with beverages, seating must be available for all guests. We recommend limiting the number per table to a maximum of ten seats; the same applies to benches. There must be a distance of at least 1.5 meters (measured from the back of the chair) between the seats of adjacent tables, staff work areas or waiting areas. Seating directly in front of the counter is permitted only with additional barriers (for example, transparent partitions as in retail).

At the table, guests may remove their face masks/coverings only during service. Before being served, guests must be able to wash their hands or, if they wish, disinfect them.

Preferably, individually packed food should be offered, which does not need to be further prepared by the exhibitor, merely opened and consumed by the customer.

Items such as sugar dispensers or toothpicks may not be placed openly on the tables; self-service buffets are not permitted.

After each use, all contact surfaces such as work surfaces, upholstery, chairs, tables, must be cleaned with a grease-dissolving household cleaner. Tablecloths and napkins must be replaced after each change of guests. Before using them again, they must be washed at a temperature of at least 60 degrees Celsius. Dishes and glasses should also be machine washed at a minimum of 60 degrees Celsius, if possible.





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Staff needs to wash or disinfect their hands after each customer contact – at least every half hour. Sufficient hand disinfectant, liquid soap and disposable towels must be available for this purpose.

B. Horn: And if I want to offer a "coffee to go" – what must be considered for this? As an exhibitor, are you allowed to give visitors a catering package that they can then eat in the hallway?

M. Leuker: To-go offers can only reasonably be served on the outdoor space where the more lenient rules of the Corona Protection Ordinance apply. Indoors, i.e. in the large halls, to-go offers would violate the general masking requirement, or the general conditions permitted for eating/drinking applicable in the catering trade. Basically, to-go offers should be offered outdoors.

B. Horn: Are visitors allowed to touch the products presented? Test them? Does the exhibitor have to disinfect the products afterwards?

M. Leuker: In line with the visitor frequency, at least twice a day, all contact surfaces including exhibits must be cleaned with a grease-dissolving household cleaner. For items that are touched particularly frequently, such as touch screens, cleaning must take place at shorter intervals. Exhibitors should ensure in advance that the surfaces are compatible with the cleaning agent they are using by referring to the relevant care manual. Cleaning of contact surfaces used for catering (such as chairs, tables, menus) must be carried out after each change of guests.

We recommend wearing gloves when handing out materials such as giveaways. However, this is not a requirement. Important: Any product once touched may not be put back or returned uncleaned. Appropriate disposal facilities must be provided. Products that can be hygienically reprocessed may be handed out again afterwards.

B. Horn: Thank you very much Markus for answering these questions.

M. Leuker: You're welcome. If any questions still remain unanswered, I would refer you once again to our detailed safety and hygiene concept and our general factsheet, which we update continuously as and when required.

