

PRESS INFORMATION

Euro Bus Expo 2008 4th-6th November 2008
NEC, Birmingham, United Kingdom
www.eurobusxpo.com



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EBE PR19

SHOW STRIKES OPTIMISTIC CHORD FOR INDUSTRY

An industry facing the current challenges with optimism was the general consensus to emerge after three hectic days of business at Euro Bus Expo 2008 last week, according to Show Director Mark Griffin.

"With many event organisers reporting huge drops in exhibitor bookings of anything up to 35% and trade visitor numbers well down in many sectors, we are extremely proud that EBE08 has delivered a quality three day experience for the bus and coach industry, in what are extremely challenging economic conditions for everyone," said Mark Griffin.

More than 10,000 attendees came to Birmingham last week for what was one of the largest trade only shows to take place at the NEC this year and the largest dedicated show for the coach and bus sector of its kind in Europe in 2008.

BBC Midlands Today broadcast live TV footage from the show for their lunchtime news slot and their Transport Correspondent Peter Plisner commented that he thought that this year's show was "one of the best ever".

A record number of 318 exhibitors – up some 12% from 2006 included 136 exhibitors new to the event put on a fantastic showcase at the NEC. Among them was Autoglym PSV, who's Sales Manager Nigel Prouten was clearly delighted with their decision to attend. "Absolutely fantastic - this is the first time we have been in 13 years and we will definitely be coming back."

Another show newcomer BAE Systems were equally enthusiastic. Di Francis, Marketing Communications Manager, Electronic & Integrated Solutions commented "An outstanding show for us. This is our first visit at any Bus and Coach related event and the response has been fantastic. We were busy throughout the whole of the three days with lots of genuine, quality enquiries to follow up."

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There were several major product launches at the show, not least on the Optare stand whose CEO Andrew Brian commented "A very good show, we are delighted with the response we have had. We have been very busy throughout and have seen plenty of activity and keen interest in our vehicles on display. The quality of the Commercial Trade Visitor has been excellent".

Across the aisle, Mark Grant, Sales Director – Bus, Coach, Engines at Scania reported good levels of business. "A very successful show - we have secured four major orders over the first two days and are expecting more by the end of Day 3. What is quite remarkable about EBE is that we deliberately brought along a new vehicle to launch at the show and visitors have been placing orders on the spot, purely as a result of visiting our stand. The throughput of visitors has been high and the quality of attendees, excellent."

The highest-ever number of vehicles – some 180 buses, coaches and mini vehicles - were at the show, more than 20% up on 2006 and effectively turning Halls 4 & 5 into a giant 35,600m² showroom for all the latest models from Europe's leading manufacturers.

This was a fact not lost on Transport Minister Paul Clark who spent Thursday morning at the show and was particularly interested in the number of hybrid vehicles making their debuts. He also spent time speaking to senior representatives of the five large bus groups, who joined forces to demonstrate just how buses and coaches are a key part of the solution to making travel more sustainable in a special "Environment Zone".

HRH the Duke of Kent was equally enthusiastic at the number of technologies on display – in and beyond the "Technology Zone" as he was given a guided tour of the show. He expressed his delight at just how upbeat the industry was despite the current economic gloom.

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Ian Hall, Sales Director at BASE shared the Royal Visitor's enthusiasm, saying "We booked to attend EBE 2008 with, admittedly, a slight degree of trepidation due to the current economic climate. However our fears were unfounded as I am pleased to report a fantastic show for BASE. Day 2 in particular was superb - we were busy from start to finish with quality operators in attendance throughout the day. EBE is a very strong show and we are absolutely delighted."

Speaking at the end of the three day event, Show Director Mark Griffin said, "We will be undertaking some detailed survey work in the coming weeks with both exhibitors and visitors to get as broad a picture as possible of the reaction to the event. However initial anecdotal evidence points to a genuine feeling of optimism and the overriding message that the industry is bucking the general economic trend. I believe EBE08 has really given our industry the shot in the arm that we have all been looking for."

Euro Bus Expo 2010 will return to the NEC Birmingham 2nd-4th November 2010.

ENDS

Notes for Editors:

1. A total of 10,089 attendees (subject to final audit) came to Euro Bus Expo 2008. Comparative figures for Euro Bus Expo 2006 were 8,862 attendees at EBE06, with a further 1,936 attendees at Transport Innovations which co-located with the 2006 event (figures ABC audited).

Captions for Photographs:

1. Euro Bus Expo which took place on 4th- 6th November 2008 at the National Exhibition Centre (NEC) Birmingham, United Kingdom saw more than 10,000 visitors and a record number of Exhibitors taking part.
2. Royal Visitor – HRH The Duke of Kent was given a guided tour of the Show by EBE08 Show Director Mark Griffin.

For media enquiries contact:

Mark Griffin, Expo Management T:+44 (0)870 224 8619 F:+44 (0)870 224 8620. email Mark@expom.co.uk