

Propak Africa packs a punch!

Propak Africa and co-located events took place from 12-15 March at the Expo Centre in Nasrec, Johannesburg, with over 600 exhibitors showcasing their newest products and technologies. Visitors had the opportunity to see the latest state-of-the-art equipment and machinery, auxiliary products and services. Many new products and services were unveiled at the show.

When it came to quantity and the quality of visitors, this year's Propak Africa really packed a punch with exhibitors nodding their approval and giving the show a big thumbs up. Visitor numbers totalled 11,792 which was an increase over the previous show edition. Noticeable trends were an increase in the number of visitors from Africa, with Botswana, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Namibia, Mozambique, Swaziland and Lesotho leading the way, and the growth of green technology, which was visible on many stands.

Not only did exhibitors like the number of feet coming through, but they liked the quality of the feet. Testimony to this were the number of sales done at the show - and the speed of the sales, some of which happened a mere two hours into the show. "We sold four machines within two hours of the doors opening," says Graham Finke, MD, Trempak, while Pierre Jurgens, MD of Cabletech Marketing says by day three they had nearly sold everything on their stand.

Filmatic had the biggest stand in its 25-year history of attending the show. Riaan van Zyl CEO says it paid off. "In the first two days of the show we were up 25% on the previous show. A day later nearly all the equipment we have on the stand has been sold and there is almost R40-million of equipment here."

Not all sales were to existing customers. Acepak's Justin Tomsett, National Sales Manager says while they do come to Propak Africa to sell off the floor, and some sales have been to existing ones, they also sold to a number of new customers. "This is testimony to the organisers getting the right people through the doors. The increase in good quality of visitors to the show has been impressive," he says.

He wasn't the only one impressed. Qualitechs' Chris King says: "We have also been pleasantly surprised by the number of new customers we have come into contact with at the show." Pakmatic's director, Ray Shaftoe, is an old hand at show. "Propak Africa is a staple show for us - we have been coming since it was hosted at the University grounds." He says this year the show introduced them to some new customers. "These are customers we had no idea existed prior to the show."

They also had an enquiry from Zimbabwe, one of many from Africa that had exhibitors excited including newcomers to Propak Africa, Alsitype Pharma Technologies. Business Manager for the company, Janice

Kruger, says they had interest from neighbouring countries, such as Botswana and Zimbabwe. “We are a fairly new company in terms of the equipment division, so the show has provided the opportunity for our customers and new customers to see our equipment first hand - a brochure is one thing but to see the machine in action is totally different.”

Green technology is a trend that has picked up since the last Propak Africa, both for exhibitors and visitors. Relloy SA GM Candice Toi says this was a focus for them. “We had a recycling machine on display and we actually sold the machine at the show to a customer in Botswana and another one to a local customer.”

Hestico's MD, Juanita Stiehler Brits, agrees. “This year we took a bigger stand and used it to show a recycling line. The movement on the stand has attracted so many visitors and we actually sold the line at the show to a new customer!”

Brendon Pearce, GM, Pyrotec Packmark, says the new leads the show provided them with makes him doubt we are in a technical recession. “They say we are in a technical recession, but I cannot believe that if you look at the new leads we have found at the show. We had very good visitors and this tells us that there are very good potential opportunities out there.”

Event director Sven Smit says he is delighted with the success of this year's Propak Africa and enthusiastic that all stakeholders benefited over the four days of the show. “We offered several exciting new initiatives this year that were of benefit to visitors to Propak Africa 2019,” says Smit. “For the first time there were free-to-attend seminars taking place daily at the show, presented by expert speakers and the content was aligned to the show's ‘four days, four themes’ topics. The themed days were also part of our new initiatives,” he says.

“Other new initiatives included a Sustainability Pavilion, a Skills Development Area and a display of the Institute of Packaging SA's Student Goldpack Award-winning entries – a window to future innovation. Four industry conferences also took place alongside the show.”

By the time the doors closed on Propak Africa 2019, almost 40% of exhibitors had said “Welcome 2022” by booking space for the next show in 2022. Considering they are booking three years in advance, this demonstrates the immense support for the show and an acknowledgement of its success and value.

For further information visit www.propakafrica.co.za

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NOTE: Specialised Exhibitions Montgomery, organisers of Propak Africa and co-located events, is a member of the prestigious Montgomery Group, one of the most widely respected exhibition companies in the world with trade shows, consumer shows and specialist projects currently spanning Europe, the Middle

East, Africa and Asia. The company is also a member of the Association of African Exhibition Organisers (AAXO).

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