

No. 2 / 2018, Cologne  
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## Business Forum Imaging 2018: Departure into new imaging realities

**The photokina congress registered growth in numbers of visitors and provided exciting insight into the most urgent themes of the imaging industry from the perspective of the specialised trade**

Record participation and an excellent mood at the Business Forum Imaging Cologne 2018: around 240 independent experts, top managers of the imaging industry, imaging service providers, specialist traders and users discussed how the trade can in future utilise the new dimensions of imaging for its purposes, and what kind of consequences continuing digitalisation has in store for traditional business models. Only seven months prior to photokina, the world's leading trade fair, the congress offered an initial exciting forecast of the dynamic development of digital imaging technologies and future-oriented marketing strategies.

The event, entitled "Creating New Realities", thereby consciously made reference to not only the technological progress in the field of virtual, augmented and mixed reality, but also dealt with the creation process with the help of innovative recording systems, new processing technologies and the application of artificial intelligence. Understanding photos and videos as communication media and reacting to the media usage of the generation of digital natives was another aspect discussed in the context of the conference. Not least, the new realities offer opportunities for marketing: never before have there been so many possibilities for making products and services digitally experienceable, and thus to support sales.

The first highlight of the conference was the lecture of Martin & Giorgio Koppehele, managing directors of Magic Horizons. The renowned producers and songwriters combine immersive sound with computer-generated images (CGI), with the aim of offering customers a new experience. They also presented business models that showed the added value virtual reality can offer.

Another trend discussed on the first day of the conference only contradicts digitalisation at first glance: printed images are more in demand than ever before. These are in the meantime often recorded with the smartphone. Ralph Naruhn, managing director of di support presented a concept in this context, with which one can design image products anywhere in the world on the smartphone and produce these immediately in the business. Kyran O'Kelly, General Manager Fujifilm Ireland, was also pleased at the new interest in printing: the "Square Prints" of the Instax instant cameras inspire Millennials around the world. Fujifilm is now expanding the concept to include posters, books and wall decor. In the context of the BFI, Kyron O'Kelly showed the role that social networks play here, and how retailers can profit



Business Forum Imaging  
Cologne  
28.02. - 01.03.2018  
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from this comprehensive solution.

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The focus of the second day was on the shopping experience. Summary: both in the stationary trade and online, and especially mobile, the focus should be on customer satisfaction. In the process, AR shopping apps, for example, presented by Hans Hartman, President of Suite 48 Analytics, can provide support: they enable the reproduction of videos from photo books or simulate a photo wall decoration in the living room. Prof. Gerrit Heinemann from the Hochschule Niederrhein even comes to the conclusion in his book "Die Neuerfindung des stationären Einzelhandels" (The reinvention of the stationary retail trade) that the specialised trade should make use of the success principles of digital business to address customers in a contemporary fashion and awaken their interest in their businesses.

The themes of this year's BFI will be taken up again at photokina 2018 (26-29 September 2018), as well as at DIGILITY, Conference and Expo for Digital Reality (26-27 September 2018) taking place parallel with photokina. For more information on the events, please visit [www.photokina.com](http://www.photokina.com) and [www.digility.de](http://www.digility.de).

#### **Popular network event**

As in previous years, visitors, sponsors and speakers of the BFI made use of the network zone and the traditional evening event in the Rheinterrassen as an opportunity for networking and communicative exchange. The event was also a success for the sponsors of the event, who presented their current imaging products and services in the network zone. Canon, Cewe and di support appeared as Gold Sponsors. The specialised trade partner was Ringfoto. Felix Schoeller, Fujifilm, Kodak Alaris, mediaclip, Mitsubishi Electric, Panasonic and scasa appeared as Silver Sponsors.

The Photoindustrie-Verband (photography industry association) and the market research company GfK Retail and Technology supported the Business Forum Imaging Cologne 2018 as partners. The congress was once again organised by the global trade journal INTERNATIONAL CONTACT in cooperation with the worldwide information service Photo Imaging News, USA.

#### **Koelnmesse - Global Competence in Digital Media, Entertainment and Mobility:**

Koelnmesse is an international leader in organising trade fairs in the Digital Media, Entertainment and Mobility segments. Trade fairs like photokina, dmexco, gamescom, INTERMOT and THE TIRE COLOGNE are established as leading international trade fairs and are being expanded by future-oriented formats like DIGILITY. Koelnmesse not only organises trade fairs in these areas in Cologne, but also in other growth markets like, for example, China, Singapore and Thailand, which have different areas of focus and content. These global activities offer customers of Koelnmesse tailor-made events in different markets, which guarantee sustainable and international business.

#### **The next events:**

Role Play Convention - Europe's biggest role play convention, Cologne 12.05. - 13.05.2018

THE TIRE COLOGNE - EMPOWERING THE ENTIRE BUSINESS, Cologne

29.05. - 01.06.2018  
INDICOM - , Cologne 03.07. - 04.07.2018

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**Note for editorial offices:**

Business Forum Imaging Cologne photos are available in our image database on the Internet at [www.bfi-photokina.com](http://www.bfi-photokina.com) in the "Press" section.

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