

Media Release

Automechanika Leading International Trade Fair for
the Automotive Sector
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DATES SET FOR NEXT AUTOMECHANIKA TRADE FAIR IN SA

The organisers of Automechanika South Africa , Dogan Trading, have agreed on dates with brand owner Messe Frankfurt for the second staging of this world-renowned international trade fair for the automotive aftermarket. It will take place from March 9-12, 2011 at MTN Expo Centre, Nasrec, Johannesburg. The city this year became the 13th in 12 countries in the world to stage an Automechanika trade fair.

The first local expo was held in March this year and the intention was to stage the the event annually. However, the economic downturn and the World Cup Football tournament, which will be making use of Expo Centre for its International Broadcast Centre, has meant a postponement of the second event until 2011.

“This means that the second edition of Automechanika SA will benefit from being staged at a venue that has undergone a R30-million rand revamp, with much-improved facilities to the benefit of both exhibitors and visitors,” said show director Philip Otto.

“We have once again received support from major industry organisations for the 2011 fair, including the National Association of Automobile manufacturers of SA (NAAMSA), Retail Motor Industry organisation (RMI), Automotive Industry Export Council (AECI) and the National Association of Automotive Component and Allied Manufacturers’ (NAACAM), while we now also have backing from Automechanika’s global partners, the Motor and Equipment Manufacturers Association (MEMA) and the European Garage Equipment Association (EGEA).

“We have already updated the local website – www.automechanikasa.co.za – and this includes an attractive, downloadable calendar featuring photographs taken at all 13 of the global Automechanika trade fairs; the calendar goes from January 2010 – where three South African models, posing at the MTN Expo Centre, are featured – to January 2011,” added Otto..

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The inaugural Automechanika SA exceeded all expectations. More than 400 companies staged indoor and outdoor displays that covered a gross display area of 25 000m², making it the biggest inaugural Automechanika automotive aftermarket trade fair to be staged since the brand went global about 10 years ago.

The original plans – made long before last year's global economic downturn - had called for 250 exhibitors. Despite the tough financial environment this target was far exceeded by the 400 companies that came to the MTN Expo Centre, situated near the new World Cup soccer stadium. They were split about 50:50 between local and international exhibitors and came from South Africa, Asia, Europe, South America and the Arab world. The Exhibition and Event Association of SA (EXSA) was also impressed by this show and it was awarded a Certificate of Excellence for trade shows of more than 12 000 m² floor space at EXSA's recent annual awards function,.

The management of the Automechanika brand at Messe Frankfurt has meanwhile announced it is confident of positive consolidated results for these global trade fairs in 2009 despite the economic downturn. This optimistic view follows record results in 2008 when sales hit a new record of €440-million, with income from foreign shows exceeding the €100-million mark for the first time (€104-million) and resulted from a ninth successive year of increased sales.

The first of these well known trade fairs staged in South Africa proved very successful in the opinion of the brand owner.

Detlef Braun, Member of the Board of Management of Messe Frankfurt, which owns the Automechanika brand, said: "With Automechanika South Africa we added another potent event to our family of high quality trade fairs. It is one of the brand's major global premières and we were delighted that it was supported by a number of prominent global companies such as ABB, ZF, Liqui Moly, Bosch, Diesel Technic, Tenneco and Castrol. This underscores the high quality of the fair."

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Many of the foreign companies took advantage of the trade fair to gain access to the South African market. For some, this was their first time in the country. Others came with the aim of further developing their working relationship with existing customers in South Africa, while also looking for additional markets.

“We are very pleased with the support we got from so many exhibitors, because they were actually pioneers in a new venture in South Africa, which underlines the strength of an established global brand such as Automechanika that dates back to 1971,” commented the local show director.

“The standard of many of the displays was outstanding and the overall atmosphere was one of professionalism. The overseas visitors seemed most impressed because for many of them it was their first visit to the African continent and they did not know what to expect,” added Otto.

The participating companies and organisations exhibited and demonstrated a wide variety of products for the workshop and replacement parts segments, as well as automotive accessories and vehicle washing products and equipment. There were also a number of automotive service providers and allied industries represented, including several from the trucking and transport industries.

About 8,200 trade visitors, many of them vehicle manufacturers, dealers, workshop proprietors, forwarding agents and investors visited the show over the four days. They came primarily from the sub-Saharan countries in Africa, although there were a number of overseas visitors.

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