

Media Release

Automechanika Leading International Trade Fair for
the Automotive Sector
Johannesburg Expo Centre, 18 - 21 March 2009

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SIZE OF DISPLAY SPACE AND SUPPORT FROM EXHIBITORS FOR AUTOMECHANIKA SA EXCEED ORGANISERS' EXPECTATIONS

Automechanika South Africa, which will be staged at Expo Centre, Johannesburg from March 18-21 has exceeded even the best expectations of the organisers, Dogan Trading, in both the size of the sold exhibition space and the number of exhibitors.

The first Automechanika SA will, in fact, be the biggest inaugural Automechanika trade fair in the world, with approximately 25 000m² of gross space sold – both indoors and outdoors. The previous largest space at a premiere was 9 500m² in St. Petersburg, Russia, with most inaugural shows having had in the region of 5 000m² exhibition space.

“We are absolutely delighted with the very positive local and international acceptance of Johannesburg as the latest venue for this famous automotive trade fair brand that was established originally in Germany more than 20 years ago and started expanding globally just over 10 years ago,” commented the show director of Automechanika South Africa, Philip Otto.

“We already have many registrations and enquiries from people in countries outside South Africa that intend coming to Johannesburg to visit this global showcase of automotive products, ranging from replacement and service parts to workshop equipment, car wash equipment, panel beating and painting equipment.

“More than 300 companies will be displaying their wares, which is even better than our original target of 250 and the majority are from countries outside South Africa.

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"A total of 11 countries have booked international pavilions – Germany, Italy, Spain, China, Thailand, Turkey, Taiwan, India, Brazil, Argentina and Malaysia. In addition, a number of individual companies from Dubai, the United States, the United Kingdom, Japan, Greece, Poland, Egypt and Peru have bought their own stands, which makes a total representation of 20 countries when we include South Africa," explained the show director.

"It is refreshing to hear the optimism emanating from many of these companies and the various country representatives. They obviously work on the premise that pessimism is catching and there is still a lot of business out there and they are going after it.

"The tightening of belts at this time is resulting in some companies and individuals keeping their vehicles longer before trading them in, so this means a higher demand for service and repair parts, which is good news for exhibitors at Automechanika SA. Trade fairs are an ideal meeting place for like-minded businesspeople and we believe Automechanika SA will be an ideal showcase opportunity for trade visitors.

"In addition, the slowdown in exports of built up vehicles from South Africa means that many of the component and accessory suppliers have excess capacity, so we expect many of them to use Automechanika SA to find export markets for their products," added Philip Otto.

"The fact that we are organising an automotive after-market trade fair with a renowned international reputation is a big plus. Although this will be the first time this well-known brand will back a local trade fair it is well known among many of the potential exhibitors, with a significant number having visited Automechanika shows elsewhere in the world – particularly the premier event in Frankfurt.

"We believe that the timing of our trade fair, in the first quarter of 2009, is also ideal in line with the recent, long-awaited announcement of the Automotive Production and Development Programme (APDP) to chart the way forward for the South African motor industry from 2013 - 2020 as the Motor Industry Development Programme (MIDP) runs out in 2012," continued the show director.

"In addition, dealership service facilities are under increasing pressure due to the big increase in vehicle sales over the past five years and operators will be looking at equipment that can make their operations more time- and cost-effective. This is an important segment of the displays at any Automechanika trade fair and I am sure many solutions to the changing requirements of vehicle servicing operators will be on display at Expo Centre in March 2009," concluded Philip Otto.

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Johannesburg now joins 12 other cities in 11 countries that already play host to an Automechanika trade fair. They are: Frankfurt (Germany), Dubai (Middle East), Istanbul (Turkey), Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia), Toronto (Canada), Mexico City (Mexico), Italy (Rome), Shanghai (China), Buenos Aires (Argentina), Bangkok (Thailand), St. Petersburg and Moscow (Russia).

The major event on the Automechanika calendar is the trade fair held every two years in Frankfurt. Last year this show attracted 161 000 visitors from 146 countries, which underlines the growing importance of the automotive aftermarket now that new vehicles sales are slowing drastically and owners are being forced to keep their vehicles longer.

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