

## 60 years K in Düsseldorf

60 years ago, on 11 October 1952, the first K show opened its gates in Düsseldorf. The German plastics industry was deep in post-war reconstruction, and the age of mass plastics production had only just dawned.

"Image building" in the positive sense was the goal to which the young industry and its various branches had committed themselves. In 1952, companies and associations, together with the then **Nordwestdeutsche Ausstellungsgesellschaft – Nowea**, today's **Messe Düsseldorf GmbH**, therefore decided to initiate an event that would demonstrate the potential and versatility of polymer materials.

[image\_0] K Düsseldorf was born – and can now look back on 60 years of success. With the irresistible rise of plastics and their conquest of virtually all spheres of modern life and innovative technologies, K has also evolved from the "Wonder of Plastics" (the title of K '52) into the No. 1 in its sector and into the international marketplace for plastics and rubber.

At its premiere in 1952, the event attracted 270 exhibiting companies, all of them from Germany's fledgling Federal Republic. They occupied about 14,000 m<sup>2</sup> of net exhibition space, and 165,000 visitors marvelled even in those days at the products from industry's chemical labs and at the varied and practical examples of their applications.

Today, the world of plastics and rubber is looking forward with anticipation to **K 2013**, which is taking place in **Düsseldorf** from **16 – 23 October 2013**. Messe Düsseldorf is expecting over 3,000 exhibitors from over 50 countries, who will be exhibiting raw materials and auxiliaries, semi-finished products, technical parts and reinforced plastics, and machinery and equipment for the plastics and rubber industry. Machinery and equipment will be claiming the lion's share of space.

[image\_1\_right] From 1952 to 1959, K Düsseldorf was purely a showcase for German industry. Any interested visitor, layperson or expert, had the opportunity to gain his or her own impression of the diversity and innovative potential of polymer materials. The main attraction for the public arriving in throngs was the colourful consumer goods of the plastics processing industry. The main focus of interest was on things that made everyday life brighter and easier. Today, we can only smile at the advertising of this era that targeted the "modern housewife" and introduced her to such novelties of the post-war period as "washable sponge bags" and sheer nylon stockings. The more specialised the plastics industry became – it was not only the standard polymers, but also high-tech plastics for special applications in electronics, medicine, automotive engineering and aerospace that attracted attention – the more the "viewing public" at K Düsseldorf declined. A radical step was taken in 1963, when K became exclusively a trade fair with an international outlook for experts from the plastics and rubber industry and the user markets.

Today, K Düsseldorf is the undisputed flagship of its industry, and as the market leader, it stands clearly apart from the competition. It has become established as the most important international innovation platform and contact forum not only for the entire plastics and rubber industry, but also for potential customers from the key user industries. Every three years, experts from vehicle manufacture, packaging, electrical engineering and electronics, communication, building construction, medical technology and aerospace have the unique opportunity to find out about the current state of plastics and rubber applications and spot future trends.

No less international than the industry are the fair's visitors. K 2010 attracted 222,000 trade visitors from over 100 nations, with over 50 % coming from outside Germany. A good quarter of visitors came from outside Europe, with some 30,000 travelling to Düsseldorf from Asia alone. Almost 10,000 specialists came from Central and South America, with some 7,500 from Africa and 6,500 from the USA and Canada.

Experts the world over know that they can gain a complete overview of the world market at K. The internationality and make-up of K's exhibitors ensures a complete cross section – in each of the sectors, the spectrum of suppliers covers everything from global players to small-scale specialists, and from inexpensive standard offerings to tailor-made tools, raw materials or processes. And even if K Düsseldorf with its three-year cycle is not the only platform at which new technologies are presented, it nevertheless hosts the greatest abundance of innovations worldwide. No other fair is home to so many new ideas.

In the 60 years of its existence, K has lost nothing of its function and fascination. On the contrary: as products, systems and processes have become more complex and the need to explain them has grown, so has the need for direct communication between suppliers and buyers. As in the past, K Düsseldorf is today the central marketplace that the business world needs as the basis for its decisions.

K 2013 from 16 to 23 October is awaited with great expectation. Which technological developments will it present and in which economic climate will it take place? Notwithstanding all the imponderabilities, one thing is already certain: with an abundance of innovations, the companies of the plastics and rubber industry will be demonstrating once again that the industry is excellently equipped for a successful future.

**Adresse:**

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