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## **Mobility trade fair sending out "strong signals" - electric mobility is main focus**

### **Wissmann: IAA complete success with over 900,000 visitors!**

*Frankfurt am Main (ots) -*

"This 64th IAA Cars is a strong IAA! The world's most important trade fair for mobility has sent out strong signals and - 60 years after its first show here in Frankfurt am Main - presented itself in a new quality. Precisely in these times of turbulence on the finance markets, the IAA has sent out strong signals of stability in manufacturing and of automotive growth. For the politicians, here it has become visible and comprehensible, just how strong the manufacturing sector is, and the innovative drive for the future that characterises this industry," stressed Matthias Wissmann, President of the German Association of the Automotive Industry (VDA), at the IAA's closing press conference in Frankfurt am Main.

This year in particular, Wissmann continued, the significance of the IAA as a platform for dialog between politics and business was "greater and more important than ever before." For example, the VDA president had welcomed German Chancellor Angela Merkel, several members of the German Government and numerous state premiers and other state-level politicians to the IAA. "Brussels also sent guests - most importantly European Commissioner Oettinger - who saw the quality of the IAA," Wissmann said.

"When a dynamic economy and targeted policy act in concert, I am sure that we will find ways for Europe to perform its tasks with more determination, energy and consistency. The finance markets must again serve the manufacturing sector. We obviously need transparent rules, that is to say, world-wide regulation of this sector," Wissmann pointed out.

Here in Frankfurt the automotive industry had shown, in the quality of its exhibits and innovations, that it had done its homework. Wissmann added that it really did offer "Future as standard." He underlined, "The 64th IAA Cars is sending out strong signals in the form of more exhibitors (1,012), more exhibition space (235,000 sq m), more world premieres (183) and more visitors than in 2009." He said the IAA had shown that "people want cars and they want innovation. They want the Internet and individual mobility. They want efficient vehicles that at the same time meet their demands for high levels of safety, comfort, quality and design - and all of that at affordable prices."

Wissmann added that the IAA's world premieres had set off a glittering display of innovations that "obviously goes down very well with the visitors to the IAA": "We can already estimate that we will ultimately have welcomed more than 900,000 visitors when this IAA closes its doors. This means that we expect at least 7 to 10 per cent more visitors than at the IAA 2009. This level of interest far exceeds our expectations. The result of people 'voting with their feet' clearly indicates - in contrast to some statements by so-called experts - that the 'fascination of the car' is very strong, especially among young people. And we regard that as a strong signal from the 64th IAA Cars," Wissmann stressed. Individual mobility - that is, having one's own car - remained a major basic need of individual freedom. "This practical experience leaves its mark anew on every rising generation," he said.

The international nature of this IAA was a factor in its quality, Wissmann said. One in five visitors comes from abroad. And already one in five foreign guests comes from Asia - whereas two years ago the figure was only one in eight. There is great interest around the world in information from this IAA - over 12,000 journalists came from 98 countries to report on the 64th IAA. Wissmann said, "In terms of quality, however, what is even more crucial is the increasing satisfaction of our customers. This year's IAA visitors are even more satisfied with the trade fair than two years ago. Almost 70 per cent of them give the IAA a mark of 1 or 2. And all the reactions from the exhibitors' stands indicate similar results. This will spur us on for the next IAA in particular." With an average age of 35 years, the IAA visitors are one year younger than those at the last IAA.

Wissmann drew attention to the fact that this mobility trade fair had pointed up major automotive trends: "Premium is continuing to advance, and the German manufacturers have a very strong position, with a global market share of 80 per cent." Sporty cars - such as roadsters, convertibles, hardtops and limousines, whether they are two or four-seaters - were "really dynamic." More models than ever before are on display at this IAA, for instance the Porsche 911, the Audi R8 Spyder GT, the Mercedes SLS AMG Roadster, the BMW M5 and the new models from Aston Martin, Ferrari, Jaguar and other importers. Yet the same is happening in all segments: the vehicles are becoming more and more efficient and economical - and they "thus ease the pressure on motorists' wallets at every visit to the filling station." CO2 was being reduced all along the transmission - but increasingly due to lightweight construction and new materials, such as carbon fibre in the BMW i3 Concept and i8 Concept. The intelligent car, that is networked with its surroundings, was no longer a Utopia, but a reality visible at the manufacturers - and was generating extra safety and comfort for the customers. At the same time the range of models for first-time buyers had been expanded by the addition of "clever new solutions" which were "tailor-made" for urban mobility "and also had a very attractive price tag." One example of this was the VW up!, which was seen by many journalists as a star of this IAA. There was also great public interest in these models, Wissmann pointed out.

"German manufacturers are showing at this IAA just how innovative they are, particularly in the small car and compact car segments. Of course electric mobility is a major factor in the quality of this IAA. The Hall of Electric Mobility was a total success. Here, too, we find that interest is by no means limited to the media; motorists and IAA visitors are also considering when they can start emissions-free driving," Wissmann said. The range on offer comprised all the alternative types of powertrains: mild hybrid, plug-in hybrid, range extender, and 100 per cent battery-powered vehicles. The vision of hydrogen and fuel cells was impressively demonstrated at this exhibition - for example by Mercedes. And in this respect the IAA slogan "Future comes as standard" was also appropriate: "Because starting from this year, and in 2012 and 2013, all German manufacturers will have electric cars on the

market," according to Wissmann.

At this IAA interest was greater than ever in the drive for innovation by suppliers, who presented 94 world premieres: "As confirmed on my walking tours, some employees hardly got away from their stands even for a minute until the first IAA weekend, so numerous and intensive were the discussions with customers. The suppliers' expertise, including the field of electric mobility, was in great demand. Overall there were a great many successful specialist discussions - in the second week, too." One factor here was the numerous walking tours on technological subjects with developers and purchasers of the German manufacturers. The German manufacturers had sent a total of over 5,000 developers and over 2,000 purchasers to the IAA.

"This year's 25 specialist events at the IAA included two premieres: The Electric Mobility Congress on 21 September, with more than 500 guests, and the carIT Congress on 22 September with well over 300 participants. Both events involved high-ranking experts. The VDA, as the organiser, had thus also chosen the right focal themes," Wissmann emphasised. According to the exhibitors, the IAA had once again shown its great value as the world's most important show for the entire automotive expertise. The focus on electric mobility, together with the specialist congress, had doubtless contributed to the success of this IAA. And the suppliers were also on the programme for the over 100 walking tours by politicians from Brussels, Berlin and the German states.

The events to encourage upcoming talent were also very successful. For example, the GoIng scheme, which is directed at schoolchildren in their final years at grammar school, attracted 900 children and their teachers, i.e. twice as many as in 2009. WorkiNG, the scheme for students, was also well attended. The schools' campaign counted over 28,000 schoolchildren, which was up by one quarter on 2009. Wissmann said, The education ministers of the states should take this as encouragement to anchor the topic of technology and mobility more actively in the curricula. Here there is great potential, which should be exploited." The test drives, the off-road circuit and the go-kart track were also very popular. This also applied to the exhibition of historic vehicles entitled "125 Years of the Automobile."

Finally, Wissmann stressed, "The IAA 2011 has exceeded our expectations in all respects. It is a strong IAA - with more premieres, more exhibitors, more exhibition space and more visitors. Here in Frankfurt the drive for innovation in this industry is more impressively demonstrated than ever before, as is the keen desire for individual mobility. The slogan 'Future comes as standard' is what this IAA is all about! Take electric mobility as an example. What started with individual concept cars two years ago is now a fixed part of the IAA 2011."

The VDA president thanked Messe Frankfurt, the police, the fire service and all the other organisations and service providers who had "supported this IAA and made an active contribution to the success of this trade fair for mobility." The preparations for the next IAA have already started: the 64th IAA Commercial Vehicles will take place in Hanover from 20 to 27 September 2012, and the 65th IAA Cars will take place from 12 to 22 September 2013, once again in Frankfurt am Main.

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