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leading international
maritime trade fair
smm-hamburg.com



Press Release · Pressemitteilung

Green shipping: An ocean of tangible solutions at SMM 2024

For four days, the shipbuilding universe met in Hamburg for the 31st SMM. The mood was excellent at the leading international maritime trade fair as well-established enterprises and start-ups alike laid out before the maritime business world the technological innovations and solutions it needs to build a green and digital shipping future. Five specialist conferences and a wide range of networking opportunities brought together high-level decision-makers from politics and business to enjoy a fireworks of presentations, discussion sessions and expert panels. Again, the key issues ensuring a successful transformation of the industry – decarbonisation, digitalisation, recruiting and maritime security and defence – were high on the agenda of SMM.

Hamburg, 06-09-2024 – SMM 2024 once more delivered on its promise of being the highlight event of the international maritime sector. From 3 to 6 September 2024, more than 2,200 exhibiting companies turned Hamburg's exhibition halls into the busy meeting hub of the global maritime community. "SMM is more than a trade fair – it is the heartbeat of this industry," said **Heiko M. Stutzinger**, CEO of Hamburg Messe und Congress (HMC). "The palpable enthusiasm among participants, the multitude of ideas and solutions, and the level of engagement shown by everybody have demonstrated how indispensable this platform is for the cooperation as well as the innovative impetus of the maritime world." Counting over 48,000 participants from more than 100 countries, SMM 2024 reaffirmed its position as the leading international maritime trade fair.

Shipowners, shipyards, suppliers: Aiming for carbon neutrality together

One theme was clearly dominant in the fully booked exhibition halls and the numerous expert discussion panels: decarbonising the shipping industry. From large ship engines for alternative fuels or smart software increasing the efficiency of on-board operations through to innovative retrofitting options, SMM covers the entire value chain of the maritime sector, delivering major added value to suppliers and shipbuilders alike. But that is by no means all: "What also makes it so interesting for shipowners: This is where they can see the latest trends and technologies and can engage in conversations with industry representatives to explore ways to make their fleets more efficient and greener," says **Martin Kröger**, Managing Director of the German Shipowners Association (VDR). This constellation paves the way for the industry to take courageous investment decisions. Doing so requires a system that rewards these investments, SMM participants from the politics and business worlds agreed.

Open conference format in the exhibition halls widely applauded

Held in the exhibition halls and open to all fair trade participants for the first time, the conferences proved to be extremely popular. On the open stages more than 300 speakers provided practical



insights and discussed the industry's most pressing issues in a total of 70 sessions. Initiator **Claus Ulrich Selbach** is more than pleased about the success of this new concept: "We achieved exactly what we had in mind: to maximise the exchange of ideas and knowledge," says the Business Unit Director Maritime & Technology Exhibitions at HMC. In view of the numerous geopolitical challenges of our time, maritime security ranged high on the agenda. Not surprisingly, MS&D, the international conference for maritime security and defence featuring 29 naval delegations from 19 nations, was exceptionally well attended. On other stages, the focus was on two other focal topics of SMM: decarbonisation and digitalisation.

Maritime Career Market and Start-ups@SMM: Young talents secure the industry's future

Providing opportunities for employers to meet tomorrow's skilled professionals was another focus at SMM 2024 – after all, the future of the sector heavily depends on the availability of skilled labour. At its two-day Maritime Career Market, the flagship fair again provided a hugely popular platform for young talents, recruiters and education institutes to join hands. Companies provided fascinating insights into a variety of maritime careers while experts presented crucial career tips.

Another part of the fair fostering inspiring discoveries was Start-ups@SMM where young companies showcased their innovative ideas in two specially designated areas. One topic of special allure: Artificial Intelligence. The AI CENTER provided a host of information on the state of the art. "The AI Center offers start-ups a fantastic opportunity to build a reputation within the industry. We were incredibly busy here and were able to make many valuable new business contacts," says **Madelena Ko** from Tecway Maritime Technology Limited, summing up her experience.

Excellent mood and lively discussions late into the evenings

The new digital SMM Networking Platform created a perfect environment for striking up conversations and establishing valuable new business contacts, not only virtually but also at many meeting points at the fair and during the well-attended Wine o'clock parties at the end of the fair days. Industry representatives were able to share ideas and establish new partnerships in a stimulating atmosphere. All this makes SMM the pivotal platform of the maritime community, a place where face-to-face interaction and direct information-sharing are front and centre.

The next SMM will take place in Hamburg from 1 to 4 September 2026.

The numbers mentioned are preliminary estimates based on statistics from the last day of the event, 12 o'clock noon. Further statements from SMM 2024 participants can be found [here](#) from 10 September 2024.

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