



Press Release | 10 April 2003

BASELWORLD – The Number One Global Business Platform for the Watch and Jewellery Industry

This year's newly branded BASELWORLD concludes today (Thursday April 10, 2003) with a downturn in visitor numbers of 22% over last year's attendance figures. This was largely due to the current economic climate, the war in Iraq and the effect of SARS. However, in spite of this drop in visitor numbers, initial exhibitor feedback suggests that the business conducted at the Show has been higher than expected.

The 31st BASELWORLD this year saw the introduction of some major new developments and initiatives. These included the launch of the new Show concept of "One Show, Two Locations", with the opening of the Hall of Universe for the country pavilion exhibitors in Zurich and the total reorganisation of the Halls in Basel to give the Show a clearer overall segmentation. A new corporate brand image and identity 'BASELWORLD – The Watch and Jewellery Show' was also introduced, designed to confirm the Show's positioning and status as the Number One business platform and launch pad for the world's leading companies and organisations in the watch and jewellery sector.

Taking place at a time of real uncertainty – the global economic downturn, the war in Iraq and the emergence of the SARS virus in the Far East and Canada – this year's BASELWORLD was extremely difficult in business terms for both exhibitors and visitors. Based on regulations of the Swiss Federal Council, the Federal Health Office issued a directive, which effectively banned exhibitors and personnel "who stayed in the countries of China, Hong Kong, Singapore or Vietnam after March 1, 2003 and who directly or indirectly travelled to Switzerland from any of these countries". This directive seriously affected exhibitor and visitor numbers, dealing a particularly hard blow to the newly located Country Pavilions in Zurich. The BASELWORLD management did all in its power to overturn the directive of April 1, 2003 but it was impossible.

The legal department of MCH Swiss Exhibition Ltd is preparing an appeal to the Federal Department of the Interior against this directive within the statutory 30 day legal period. MCH Swiss Exhibition Ltd is considering further legal measures in order to obtain compensation. All exhibitors affected by the directive are being referred to the Financial Department of Switzerland to make their respective claims.

René Kamm, CEO of MCH Swiss Exhibition Limited, commenting on the directive said: "We deeply regret that we were forced to maintain the measures as defined in the directive of April 1, 2003 and the impact that this Federal directive has had on all our exhibitors and, in particular, those exhibitors from the affected regions".

BASELWORLD – The Watch and Jewellery Show – continues to act as the barometer for the luxury goods industry. Key exhibitors at the Basel location have reported that the quality of orders was good to excellent, with visitors focusing on new designs in the middle to upper price range. Most of the exhibitors spoken to believed that attendance at BASELWORLD not only positively benefited their businesses but also had a strong impact on their image and marketing. Many reported that there had been an increase in press attendance this year, from both specialist and fashion publications.

With regard to BASELWORLD 2004, René Kamm said: “Our efforts will first of all be focused on consolidating the new developments and initiatives introduced at this year’s Show. We will be reviewing the new Zurich location and discussing with exhibitors whether they would be prepared to continue exhibiting in Zurich. Furthermore, we will give full consideration to the feedback from all our exhibitors and visitors to ensure that we modify and improve the Show where necessary, in line with being the premier showcase for the watch and jewellery industry”.

BASELWORLD 2004 – The Watch and Jewellery Show will take place April 15 – 22, 2004.

Quotes of exhibitors of BASELWORLD 2003

Guillaume De Seynes, CEO, Hermès: “For us, it’s very important at BASELWORLD to reinforce our presence, to reinforce our legitimacy in this industry and I think that’s the purpose of our being here, of having a large space”.

Gerd R Lang, Founder of Chronoswiss: “This is the place to come and look for novelties, to look for ideas and to have emotion”.

Cindy Livingston, President Callanen Int.: “BASELWORLD is our home, it’s our international home – we’ll always be at BASELWORLD. I think the Show is wonderful, I think the new setup is fantastic. We don’t have offices around the world so this truly is our international office”.

Leonzio Pizzo, Founder of Leo Pizzo: “This Show for us has always been the most important and I am sure that it will always be the most important Show”.

Filippo Picchiotti, Picchiotti: “The exhibition is going up in the level of furniture, exhibitors and customers. And this is in the long term very, very important.”

Levon Toros Kalfayan, Founder of Ayko: “Of course, the Show is quiet this year, but I believe very much in BASELWORLD and it’s a very good trampoline by which to launch oneself on a global scale. It gave me the possibility of doing just that”.

Guy Ellia, Founder, Guy Ellia: “I think that business itself hasn’t really suffered – just visitor numbers. So I’m fairly happy considering the circumstances in which this year’s Show took place”.

BASELWORLD – The Watch and Jewellery Show

Dates: **Thursday, 3 April to Thursday, 10 April 2003**
Location: **Basel Exhibition and Zurich Exhibition halls**
Organiser: **MCH Basel Exhibition Ltd., a subsidiary of MCH Swiss Exhibition Ltd.**
Openings hours: **Daily from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Last day: 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.**
Internet: **www.baselworld.com**
e-mail: **visitor@baselworld.com**

Number of visitors	64'350
Number of exhibitors	2'163
Basel	1'377
Zurich	786
Exhibitors from China, Hong Kong, Singapore and Vietnam	394
Basel	11
Zurich	383

The cantons of Basel and Zurich are responsible for monitoring the measures according to the directive of April 1, 2003
MCH Swiss Exhibition has received verbal confirmation of its having fulfilled all the measures set down in the directive of April 1, 2003

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