

LEARNTEC Continues Impressively on Course toward the Future

Europe's leading trade fair for digital education was more successful than ever

Karlsruhe, 30 January 2020: This year's LEARNTEC ended with record-breaking statistics that reconfirm its leading position as Europe's foremost fair for digital education in Europe. With 411 exhibitors from 17 nations (2019: 341 exhibitors from 15 nations) – an increase of 24% – LEARNTEC 2020 presented itself as even more international, more innovative and larger than ever before. A record number of 15,600 visitors – 34% more than in 2019 – came to the Karlsruhe Trade Fair Centre to discover all about the latest trends in learning. The proportion of international trade visitors likewise increased by well over 33%.

“The past three days have clearly shown that digital learning is no longer just a future trend, but also an important growth market. LEARNTEC succeeds excellently in bringing supply and demand together, and the fair strongly attracts new visitors. LEARNTEC thus proves once again that it is Europe's largest industry platform and trend workshop”, summarizes Britta Wirtz, Managing Director of Karlsruhe Trade Fair Centre. “The enormous increase in the numbers of exhibitors and visitors shows us that there is indeed a big demand for digital education. We have accordingly decided to open an additional third hall for the first time next year at LEARNTEC 2021.”

By the end of this year's fair, more than 80% of the available stand space had already been booked for the upcoming LEARNTEC 2021, both by longstanding customers and by new companies that will be presenting themselves at LEARNTEC for the first time in 2021. Saber Romdhani, Digital Learning Consultant at Masterplan, says: “At LEARNTEC, we reach a keenly interested audience of specialists who are seeking and finding accurately targeted solutions. We were well taken care of, both prior to and during the event. We are taking many valuable lessons home with us from this year's fair. And we have already booked our stand for 2021.” The excellent results of the annual event underline its top position as the most dynamically growing education fair: as recently as December 2019, the

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trade-fair publisher m+a conferred its “Project of the Year 2019” award on LEARNTEC as Germany’s most future-oriented trade fair.

Demand for digital school offerings is growing rapidly

The Digital Pact adopted by the German government is having a visible impact at LEARNTEC. The subject area on the digital school continued its strong growth trajectory this year, with approximately one third more exhibitors than last year presenting their products for the digital school of the future. “Digitalization in schools should not be reduced to technology alone, but must be viewed as a whole. We need to anchor the content in the curriculum, to integrate the new technical possibilities methodically and didactically, and to train teachers so they can make pedagogically meaningful use of digital media in their classrooms. LEARNTEC offers numerous examples of this”, says Dr. Susanne Eisenmann, Minister of Education and Cultural Affairs of Baden-Württemberg, who opened LEARNTEC 2020.

The exhibitors are likewise feeling the increased demand. Patrick Stecker, Sales Manager West at H + H Software, says: “We were able to hold even higher-quality talks in 2020. Even more than in previous years, we were able to meet our primary target group of school boards and local authorities at LEARNTEC. We owe this to various factors that come together here, including federal subsidies under the Digital Pact. LEARNTEC optimally brings together the interests of visitors and exhibitors. As far as I am concerned, LEARNTEC could continue for an additional ten days.”

Internationally top-class experts give lectures on trends in digital learning

The LEARNTEC Congress was also very well received. The selected keynotes were highlights at the very well-attended congress. Among the other speakers addressing the congress’ visitors were Irene Oksinoglu, Head of the Future Work initiative at OTTO; Christian Baudis, digital entrepreneur and futurist; and Reinhard Karger, company spokesman of the German Research Centre for Artificial Intelligence (DFKI). “We are delighted that the programme was so well received by the congress’ visitors and that the quality of the sections in particular was appreciated”, summed up Sünne Eichler, Jane Hart and Prof. Dr. Peter A. Henning from the LEARNTEC Congress Committee.

LEARNTEC future lab was a magnet for visitors

The LEARNTEC future lab, which was developed by Karlsruhe Trade Fair Centre in cooperation with Bosch Software Innovations, created a lively experiential area where visitors to LEARNTEC 2020 could familiarize themselves with future technologies and visions in the field of digital learning. The numerous innovations on display here included Merge Cubes, an intelligent chatbot from AI Coaching, and media artist Dr. Jens Stober's VR game "Cloudwalker", which is controlled by brainwaves. "We are overwhelmed by the enthusiastic response at the future lab. We were literally overrun: incredibly many visitors actively participated, took photos and captured key ideas in sketchnotes. The result is a lively work of art all about digital learning", says Dr. Sirkka Freigang, Head of Smart Learning Environments at Bosch Software Innovations.

Start-ups present creative approaches

Innovative ideas are important growth drivers, also in the education sector. This is why LEARNTEC once again provided special support for the industry's up-and-coming talent in 2020. In the fair's Start-up Area, young entrepreneurs presented their future-oriented new developments in the field of digital learning. The Start-up Area was further enlarged this year so that a total of 48 start-ups could present their approaches to the audience of specialists. The young entrepreneurs competed with other start-ups by presenting Pecha Kucha lectures. Daniel Kleditzsch, CEO and founder of JOLECO, summarizes: "We are convinced by the overall package and the professional organization – from the initial contact to the finished stand. We had good interactions with our visitors and we had many lengthy and individualized conversations. The presentation in the Start-up Area, as well as the industry evening on the first day of the fair, were helpful for us as a young company to network and gain cross-industry experience." Networking was further facilitated by the LEARNTEC App with its matchmaking function: nearly half of the fair's visitors used the app.

Discover digital learning worlds with AR/VR

LEARNTEC again devoted itself to virtual realities in 2020. Moreover, collaboration with the First German Virtual Reality (VR) Association

underwent further intensification in 2019. Exhibitors in the AR/VR Area again presented their latest technologies, including the Microsoft HoloLens. Ralf Hoffmann, District Managing Director of the DRK Kreisverband Herford-Stadt e.V., expressed his enthusiasm about the event: “LEARNTEC is both a family get-together and a sharing of ideas among professionals. We are delighted with the terrific atmosphere and the interested audience. Here we can palpably feel that analogue and digital come together like two pieces of the same puzzle: they complement each other wonderfully well at this trade fair. Digital learning supports analogue and offers new opportunities to share experiences and gain added value. Anyone who wants to experience what the future will be tomorrow simply must come to Karlsruhe today.”

The next LEARNTEC will take place at Karlsruhe Trade Fair Centre from 2 to 4 February 2021.

Additional comments by exhibitors

Björn Carstensen, Co-Founder and Managing Director of Lemon Systems GmbH: “The mix is absolutely right. At LEARNTEC, we find the target group that we need: decision-makers from medium-sized businesses, large corporations and universities. And the digital approach, moving away from the focus on didactics, precisely corresponds to the developments in the industry and is well presented here.”

Onno Reiners, Head of the Compliance Business Unit at M.I.T e-Solutions GmbH: “It is clearly noticeable that this trade fair is in experiencing an upward trend. We welcomed a large number of visitors to our stand and the quality of the contacts again increased significantly this year.”

Dr. Maria Walther, Managing Director at Walther Learning Solutions: “This is our first time at LEARNTEC and we are very positively surprised. We had very good discussions and we hosted a good mix of visitors at our stand – from trade visitors to e-learning beginners, whom we have been accompanying from the very beginning. We can clearly see that there is a strong demand for digital education and that interest in it has grown markedly.”

Christian Hanster, Managing Director at endoo: “The theoretical part of the Digital Pact is now being implemented. All participants are beginning to really think about the topic in greater depth. This is our third time at LEARNTEC and we have seen that the digital-school section has grown with each successive year. The audience’s interest is likewise growing progressively stronger. We had inspiring discussions here. All in all, LEARNTEC has a very good profile.”

Jörg Schmalhofer, Key Account Manager B2B at the Westermann Group: “We were at LEARNTEC for the third time in 2020. And we also presented ourselves for the first time in Hall 1, where we had very high visitor frequency and many good discussions. We will surely return in 2021.”

Frank Draing, Publishing Manager at Dr.-Ing. Paul Christiani GmbH & Co. KG: “The number of visitors continues to increase and there was plenty of activity at our stand. We are satisfied with the number of discussions. And the process of setting up the stand worked wonderfully well.”

Sophie Labralette, Marketing Manager DACH at saba: “Compared to last year, LEARNTEC 2020 was definitely better attended. We were also able to hold significantly higher-quality discussions this year.”