

Messe Frankfurt takes the reins of SA textile, footwear and apparel shows

By  Lauren Hartzenberg

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The South African subsidiary of global trade fair company Messe Frankfurt has acquired Africa's largest textile, footwear and apparel shows [Source Africa](#) and [ATF](#) (Apparel, Textile & Footwear).



Until now the events were organised by Leaders in Trade Exhibitions (LTE), which has been in the business of organising trade shows for over 25 years. Speaking at the announcement on Friday morning, LTE member William Scalco said that despite being satisfied with the success of the events, the company believes that handing over the reins to an international organisation will help grow the shows on an international scale.

Scalco referred to a report by McKinsey & Co. that saw African countries – including South Africa, Mauritius, Swaziland, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Egypt and Botswana – being mentioned for the first time as top sourcing destinations for apparel, textiles and footwear. He said that South Africa can become an especially major sourcing destination and that opportunities will continue to surface for local manufacturers.

"Since its inception in 2013, it has been the objective of Source Africa to promote African apparel, textiles and footwear and encourage linkages between international and regional buyers, manufacturers and suppliers, thereby promoting investment into manufacturing capacity in Africa with the goal of accelerating jobs for our people."

"We have found an ideal partner in Messe Frankfurt and with their worldwide network and expertise we can establish Source Africa as the go-to calendar event for international and regional industry professionals."

Global network opportunities

Germany-born Messe Frankfurt is the third largest trade fair company in the world with operations in over 50 countries and is the leader, globally, in textile fairs. It organises over 134 trade fairs around the world with over 90,000 exhibitors and roughly 3.5m visitors. Source Africa and ATF will be added to Messe Frankfurt South Africa's portfolio of local fairs, which include the South African Festival of Motoring, Automechanika and Cape Town International Boat Show.

The MD of Messe Frankfurt SA, Konstantin Von Vieregge, spoke at the launch breakfast and expressed the company's faith in South African industry.

"Our South African branch is a truly South African company with the support of a global network. We are not in South Africa just to make a quick buck. We think 15 to 20 years ahead and we see growth in South Africa and Africa so we are here to stay. We are committed to ensuring the growth of these industries in South Africa and we want to expose South Africa's potential to the rest of the world."

Von Vieregge described the benefits of having a global company like Messe Frankfurt run trade events like Source Africa and ATF. "We'll be integrating these two shows into our global network, which will open up new doors and put it on the map as a show that's not just regional, but part of a bigger network."

"Messe Frankfurt has a strong name in the industry and that adds credibility. We have access to global experts because that's what we do on a day to day basis and we can ensure global standards for the show - when we put our name on a trade fair there are certain standards we have to adhere to. Importantly, we have cross-marketing opportunities globally so that means we can promote the SA show around the world."

The Source Africa Trade Show 2018 will take place on 20 and 21 June 2018, at the CTICC in Cape Town. The 2017 ATF Trade Show, which will take place from 21 to 23 November this year at the CTICC in Cape Town will still be managed and organised by LTE.

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