

# Looking forward to the New Year – and IMHX 2016



**JAMES CLARK**, SECRETARY-GENERAL OF BITA, LOOKS AT HOW IMHX HAS GROWN SINCE IT BEGAN IN 2001, AND WHY THE POWER OF REAL FACE-TO-FACE INTERACTION MEANS IT REMAINS A KEY EVENT IN THE INDUSTRY'S DIARY.

**IMHX allows companies to achieve multiple sales and marketing objectives at once**



Fire-breathing circus performers, dancing girls and a robotic parrot were just some of the attractions used

by exhibitors to lure people to their stands at the first ever IMHX in 2001, which attracted more than 15,000 visitors, and at that time was the UK's largest ever business-to-business show.

Fast forward 14 years and IMHX, which we co-own with Informa Exhibitions, the publisher of this august organ, is still very much a key event, eagerly anticipated across the materials handling industry. The last IMHX took place in 2013 and attracted 19,500 visitors and over 400 exhibitors across four halls at Birmingham's NEC. This fifth event was the biggest ever – but the coming sixth IMHX, taking place from 13th-16th September 2016, is forecast to be even bigger!

This is despite the number of communication channels multiplying on an almost daily basis. Skype enables face-to-face virtual meetings and PowerPoint presentations can be viewed on screen via GoToMeeting. But there is still no substitute for genuine face-to-face interaction.

This is amply demonstrated by figures from the independent live events research organisation FaceTime, which found that 80% of those interviewed agree that live events deliver a better return on investment than other media. This is matched almost exactly by the 77% of attendees at IMHX 2013, who stated that visiting IMHX would influence their buying decisions, with £94m worth of orders attributed to buyers visiting the show.

#### MULTIPLE OBJECTIVES

As the biggest UK materials handling show, taking place across 32,000 sq m of floor space, the equivalent of four Wembley football pitches, IMHX allows companies to achieve multiple sales and marketing objectives at once: direct sales, database-building, corporate hospitality, market research, brand awareness, and product demonstrations. And with approaching 20,000 logistics professionals gathering together in one place, the networking opportunities speak for themselves.

Sponsored by leading financial services provider Investec, IMHX 2016, taking place once again at the NEC in Birmingham, will reflect every aspect of 21st century intralogistics. This includes a dedicated Supply Chain IT Village showcasing the latest logistics and supply chain technology, a speaker programme featuring topical and prestigious speakers from across the industry, right through to racking and the latest fork lift trucks and materials handling solutions.

And of course BITA will also be organising the Design4Safety awards at the show, which give all exhibitors the opportunity to highlight the crucial safety benefits of their products and services.

Entering the Awards can bring publicity, recognition and profile. Promotional activity before and during the show will support exhibitors' marketing efforts and provides a great way to help attract customers and visitors to an exhibitor's stand.

All IMHX exhibitors can enter the Design4Safety Awards across six different categories encompassing the whole materials handling industry:

- INDUSTRIAL VEHICLES
- AUTOMATION
- GOODS-IN/GOODS-OUT
- RACKING & STORAGE
- TECHNOLOGY
- WAREHOUSE INFRASTRUCTURE

As one of the key events of its kind in Europe, IMHX will also be used by many major exhibitors to launch their new product ranges and innovations. To find out more go to [www.imhx.biz](http://www.imhx.biz).

It only remains for me to say, after a busy and successful 2015, I hope for more of the same in 2016 – and wish you all a very merry Christmas and a happy and prosperous New Year – see you at the NEC in September! ■

[www.bita.org.uk](http://www.bita.org.uk)

**IMHX 13TH-16TH  
SEPTEMBER 2016,  
NEC BIRMINGHAM**

TAKING PLACE  
ACROSS 32,000 sq  
m OF FLOOR SPACE,  
THE EQUIVALENT  
OF FOUR WEMBLEY  
FOOTBALL PITCHES

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DESIGN4SAFETY  
AWARDS ACROSS  
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SERVICES

**TO FIND OUT MORE VISIT [WWW.IMHX.BIZ](http://WWW.IMHX.BIZ)  
AND [WWW.DESIGN4SAFETY.COM](http://WWW.DESIGN4SAFETY.COM)**



Lifting Industry Standards