

# IZB 2018 Trade Show

Wolfsburg, Germany | 16-19 October 2018

## Location

The show is located in northern Germany. It is located right next to the VW campus. It is easy access by Plane through Hanover (60km) or Berlin (240km) via car or high-speed rail. Wolfsburg itself is small and hotel accommodations are not adequate. Many attendees stayed in Hannover or Berlin and commuted each day. Hotels had inflated rates for this show with no flexibility or cancellations allowed.

## Infrastructure

There is no exposition center in Wolfsburg. IZB is housed in temporary structures. It comprises 7 'buildings' linked with tunnels. Buildings were constructed with hard sided walls and tent like ceilings (see pics). The advantage was that this required a floor be installed which was elevated. This allowed the utilities including plumbing and electrical to be strategically located in each both.



## Scope of Show

IZB is held every other year. It began as a VW supplier conference and is now targeted at all automotive suppliers, however VW supply chain members (and those aspiring to be) are dominant. The show was well attended on all three days with the final day being the lightest. The show was very heavily weighted to Connectivity and Innovation.

Electrical systems, wiring harnesses, digital dashes were well represented for hardware. There was a large number of software companies showing as well that concentrated on connectivity. Regarding NA manufacturing opportunities, there were some. There were companies that mold things like small trim buttons. Also Die casting and small press dies were evident.

## Booth Activity

Good attendance and traffic flow. Good spot and attractiveness to the booth. There were not great product identifiers in the booth. Common first question was "What are you selling?" which makes me wonder if we missed opportunities from people who did not bother to ask and just walked past. The Ontario booth stood out as it was taller than surrounding booths (it could be spotted several aisles away) and it was predominantly dark in colour (contrasting nicely with the all white theme that was common at the show). Kudos to the marketing people for scoring big on presence.



Booth support was very good with representatives from both domestic and international Federal and Provincial trade departments, APMA, CAMM and a couple of private companies. There were usually 3-6 people on the booth at all times and drawing on each others expertise showed professionalism and good organization.

There were several people who came to the booth to discuss North American opportunities. Some with experience but many with none. There were questions around geography...location about the American market, and obstacles dealing with the US market from Canada – tariffs and other barriers. Many were surprised to learn how central SW Ontario is to the US market and how much trade Canada does with USA. I would recommend a map be included in the next show with concentric distance rings and infographics on market geographies and demographics.

### **GTAI Breakfast**

The Wednesday morning breakfast sponsored by the German Trade and Invest (GTAI) was very well attended. It was full of information on becoming a supplier to Volkswagen as well as information on doing business in Germany in general. A copy of the presentation by Ulrich Gerek of VW would be very useful to Canadian companies wishing to do business with VW, in Germany, USA or Mexico. Not sure if the Trade Commissioners office could facilitate this but it would be worth asking.



### **Leads**

The quantity of leads was not great for the CAMM membership but there was no expectation there would be. There is little chance our members will sell product to Germany when there are over 2000 mold manufacturers in Germany. There were however several companies that were looking for support in the NAFTA region. There are German companies that ship tooling from Europe to NA and struggle with support. One such company expressed interest in sourcing in Canada should we be able to meet their quality requirements (not an issue). There was also an inquiry from a company that ships tooling into the NAFTA region from China. They were concerned with two issues, China tariffs and the USD \$16.00/hour content rule. Both of these concerns should be brought to the attention of our membership to explore and to look for other similar opportunities resulting from the recent trade 'dispute'. One curiosity, there were no badge scanning units that I saw at the show. Business card exchange was the sole method of collecting leads. While badges did have small bar codes, many did not have names or companies displayed, again making it more difficult to collect leads.

### **Conclusion**

The show is an excellent vehicle for Canada/Ontario to gain exposure and continue to get our message out that we are both, open for business, and possess the high tech resources to be successful partners in all aspects of manufacturing. I would also recommend CAMMs continued participation at this level to enable us to seek collaborative opportunities and continue to get our 'brand' out and be recognizable on the world stage. Opportunities to interface with our government representatives and network with industry executives will only open more doors for membership to continue to gain traction around the world.

