

„Wherever we identify opportunities, we intend to make use of them“

Since February 1, Lars Wismer has served as Regional Head of “Messe Düsseldorf for Asia (MDfA)”. In his inaugural interview, he outlines the importance of Asian markets, discusses strategic opportunities – and explains MDfA’s role as a connecting element within the global Messe Düsseldorf portfolio.

In 2024, Messe Düsseldorf consolidated its activities in Asia under a single umbrella. The regional hub “Messe Düsseldorf for Asia” (MDfA) brings together the five subsidiaries based in Singapore, Hong Kong, New Delhi, Tokyo, and Shanghai within a centrally coordinated network. This efficient structure is designed to drive further growth in Asia and create feedback effects for the world-leading trade fairs in Düsseldorf. Since February 1, Lars Wismer has been heading MDfA as Regional Head, succeeding Gernot Ringling. In his inaugural interview, he talks about the strategic importance of Asia, the role of MDfA, and how the regional hub aims to create added value for customers and markets.

Mr. Wismer, you assumed responsibility for MDfA on February 1. How have the past few weeks been for you?

Very intense – and not only because of my move to Singapore. My priority was to gain a solid understanding of the situation on the ground as quickly as possible. To that end, I held numerous discussions with my new team and our partners, which provided valuable insights. Asia is not a homogeneous region. Particularly in Southeast Asia, markets are developing at very different speeds while remaining closely interconnected economically. For Messe Düsseldorf, this means identifying opportunities wherever they arise and making use of them.

What role does MDfA play in this context?

MDfA manages Messe Düsseldorf’s Asia business from Singapore. The objective is to align the activities of our five subsidiaries in the region more closely. This enables us to offer companies seeking to grow in Asia reliable platforms across all relevant markets

from a single source. In doing so, we ensure that our strong trade fairs in the region continue to grow sustainably, while at the same time attracting additional Asian companies and visitors to our world-leading trade fairs in Düsseldorf.

What vision are you pursuing for MDfA in the coming years?

From my previous role as Director of glasstec and A+A, I know how important clear structures, coordinated processes, and close collaboration are to the success of trade fairs. I want to apply this understanding to MDfA. By working even more closely together, strengthening internal networking, and deliberately bundling our existing strengths, we can significantly expand our reach as an organizer. It is important to me that we develop a shared mindset over the long term and continue to anchor MDfA strategically both in the region and in Düsseldorf.

Which markets are currently a particular focus?

This depends very much on the topic and the industry. India is currently a key market with consistent growth and strong long-term potential. I was able to experience this firsthand at our Medical Fair India at the end of January. In addition, countries such as Vietnam, Thailand, and Cambodia are developing very dynamically. The relocation of an increasing number of production sites is noticeably changing local conditions and opening up new opportunities for our trade fair formats.

In which areas is Messe Düsseldorf already well positioned?

Thanks to our broad portfolio, I see Messe Düsseldorf as being in an excellent overall position. We are particularly strong in the print and packaging sectors. These areas benefit in many Asian markets from growing industry, rising production levels, and strong demand. In addition, the healthcare sector is another key pillar: Medical Fair Thailand was recently the largest in its history, underscoring the significant potential of medical technology and healthcare markets in the region. This is where we intend to continue building on our strengths.

About the person:

Lars Wismer has many years of experience in the trade fair and event industry. Between 1999 and 2015, he worked at Messe Düsseldorf as a Senior Project Manager. He then moved on to Düsseldorf Congress Sport & Event GmbH and later to D.LIVE GmbH & Co. KG. In 2022, Wismer returned to Messe Düsseldorf. On December 1, he assumed the position of Director of the world-leading trade fairs glasstec and A+A. In this role, he was also responsible for the international portfolios Glass Technologies, including the trade fairs glasspex and glasspro for the Indian market, as well as Occupational Safety & Health, comprising the events TOS+H, CIOASH, CIOASH Thailand, JIOSH+W, and OS+H Asia. Wismer now builds on this experience in his current role as Regional Head of "Messe Düsseldorf for Asia (MDfA)".