

Six Questions to... Olaf Freier



Around 500 exhibitors, 25,000 square metres of floor space, an impressive conference programme, countless company presentations and networking opportunities, live demonstrations and a platform focused on attracting young people into the field of geomatics: Intergeo 2013 has all the ingredients to become a great success. Olaf Freier, managing director of HINTE Messe which is organising the event, explains what we can expect from this year's edition of the world's largest congress and trade fair for geomatics. He also provides an insight into Intergeo Eurasia – to be held in April 2014 in Istanbul, Turkey – and next year's 20th edition of Intergeo in Berlin.

Another year has passed, another summer is turning into autumn so it must be time for Intergeo again. What will the 2013 edition bring compared to other years?

Intergeo 2013 will demonstrate further developments in the range of applications for unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) and the increasingly complex systems for data capture and processing. It will be interesting to see how process chains have been expanded by smartphones and tablets and to discover the new opportunities that are opening up for applications in the field of geoinformation systems. This could also prove very useful in our national and international quest to answer increasingly complex riddles relating to the energy revolution and smart cities, for example. These industries have had another whole year to develop and produce new solutions that will be showcased at Intergeo.

What can attendees expect this time, and do you have any recommendations for them?

Visitors can expect to see around 500 exhibitors in three halls covering more than 25,000 square metres of floor space. Essen will see the proportion of foreign exhibitors at Intergeo increase to over 42%, which is over 5% more than last year. The conference and trade fair will be linked even more closely this year in areas such as the energy revolution, smart cities and satellite navigation/positioning, and the conference programme will expand upon the solutions and products on display at exhibitors' stands. The open areas at Intergeo will certainly also be put to good use, enabling visitors to inspect the recording systems on the ground as well as watching them perform in flight.

There's no future for geomatics without new students. How does Intergeo contribute to making potential students enthusiastic for the field of geomatics?

Intergeo is intensifying its activities and gearing its programme more towards young technicians and students in Essen. This year, with the aid of a partner organisation, we are introducing a new conceptual element called the Job Shaker. The aim is to bring together interested emerging talent with the exhibiting companies to stimulate enthusiasm for the field. A special programme of company presentations and networking opportunities has been compiled for the Tuesday and Thursday in the Trend and Media Forum. We will further expand this concept in Berlin next year, but at the moment we are really looking forward to the inaugural session in Essen.

Essen is the host city of this year's Intergeo. Where should people go to enjoy the city after a busy day at the Intergeo conference and on the exhibition floor?

There will be plenty of choice in Essen. The city centre offers various ways to relax and round off your day, with something to suit everyone's taste. There's lots to choose from in culinary terms too – from the gourmet temple to simple sandwiches, star chefs to burger stands. Essen offers variety and a warm welcome to everyone.

From 27 to 29 April 2014, Intergeo Eurasia will be held in Istanbul. Can you already give us an idea what we can expect?

Intergeo Eurasia will be held for the first time in Istanbul, Turkey, in cooperation with Messe Munich International. Their international Seismic Safety trade fair covers the areas of earthquake and fire protection and urban renewal. We will now be joining forces to produce a new combination of synergies for the Black Sea region that will be of interest to geodesists, construction engineers, town planners and architects – addressing the important and contemporary subjects of land management, geoinformation and preventive measures in construction and infrastructure. The idea is to offer the conference and both trade fairs as interdisciplinary forums to enable the different target groups to discuss products and solutions.

Next year Berlin is waiting; this will mark the 20th edition of Intergeo. Was that the reason for choosing Berlin, metropolis and capital of Germany, as host city?

Yes, 2014 promises to be a special year for Intergeo. Berlin was chosen as the location for various conceptual and strategic reasons. I don't want to reveal too much right now, but we've already got some ideas on the go. In particular, we would like to improve our links with national and European politics to increase awareness and stimulate dialogue on the political stage. We can also assume that, with Berlin as its starting point, Intergeo 2014 will develop a stronger European position and focus in both conceptual and structural terms. Geoinformation is, and will remain, of key interest – not just in Germany, but right across Europe. Intergeo and its conference and trade fair will continue to develop as a central European forum for the necessary national and international dialogue in this field.

