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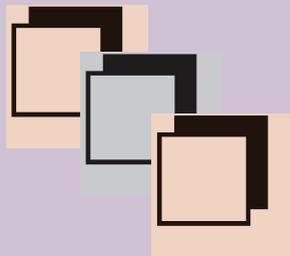
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Comment

So, finally, it is all over. Third time lucky really; actually four for me, I missed FIT 2019. I had a virus: dry cough, high temperature, lost my appetite. Then in December, when the government announced a new virus called Covid 19 and described its symptoms – well I couldn't help but wonder.

Anyway, after a few false starts FIT finally happened. It was a buzzy affair. It seemed to prove how much we have missed each other. This time last year's lockdown was just about over, at least in part, and we could meet in restaurants again. There was an air of uncertainty though and even when, in July, almost all restrictions were officially off, it still wasn't the same.

But, as strange as it felt at first to be around so many people it was a great feeling. And FIT saw a lot of business done too. Visitors came to do business and, from the reports we have had, exhibitors were more than satisfied. Nicki West, the event director, told me that bookings for next year are strong and, not just with this year's exhibitors but she is in negotiation with some major companies who were not there this year.

For a while the FIT Show was having a bumpy ride but it seems set for a strong future with the next event in 2023 and becoming biennial on odd numbered years after that: – 2025, '27 and so on. West was adamant that there is no plan for FIT to become an annual show. The event next year is just intended to get it in line so that in the long run it will not clash with Fensterbau Frontal.

One of the strengths the FIT Show has is being at the National Exhibition Centre. As much as I have complained about the NEC in the past – and don't get me started on the parking arrangements, they locked my car in the car park on Monday – it is really the best placed venue for a national exhibition. FIT spent its first two – or three – years at Telford, a venue which seems to have jinx on window exhibitions. Too far away from the main motorways it takes an age to get there and when you do the parking is not so plentiful. Previously, a regional exhibition shrivelled and died there from a lack of visitors. At least the NEC is accessible and has plenty of hotels nearby.

Another event to look forward to is Glasstech at Messe Düsseldorf in September this year. This too is the first event in a while but bookings are good according to Anke Seltman from Messe Düsseldorf. As usual the event has a number of associated conferences running at the same time and, almost inevitably, there is much emphasis on sustainability and the environment.

We understand that there will be a strong contingent of exhibitors from the UK as well.

In the past the event has attracted a good many visitors from the UK though I have never been quite certain whether the real attraction was the exhibition itself or the Irish bar in Düsseldorf's Altstadt!

John Roper