

BIOTECHNICA 2009 - turning ideas into value

BIOTECHNICA 2009, which took place in Hanover, Germany from 6th to 8th October 2009, featured the seminal motto "Turning ideas into value". Europe's leading annual event for the biotechnology sector had a larger number of exhibitors and more exhibition space than last year, which was seen as positive in the midst of economic crisis. "Even before the official opening, the large number of registered exhibitors and exhibition space commissioned created an upbeat atmosphere," said Stephan Ph. Kühne, member of the managing board of Deutsche Messe AG, Hanover. Experts from the fields of industry and science, decision-makers and other interested visitors to the joint Baden-Württemberg booth participated fully in this positive atmosphere, with face to face encounters and other networking activities. The joint Baden-Württemberg booth, of around 400 m², brought together almost 30 universities, companies and service providers who presented a cross-section of the biotechnology sector in Germany's southwest. The exhibition programme was rounded off by numerous talks and plenary discussions hosted in the booth's Forum.



Breakfast in the Baden-Württemberg lounge
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On the second day of the exhibition, BIOPRO Baden-Württemberg featured its first BIOTECHNICA Matinée, enabling the state's networkers to meet up and discuss topics of interest. Dr. Ralf Kindervater, CEO of BIOPRO Baden-Württemberg GmbH, led a discussion entitled "Biotechnology - quo vadis?" attended by approximately 30 people who had been invited to the morning session. Kindervater responded to the question by saying: "BIOPRO has focused on "clustering" for about two years now. One of BIOPRO's most important activities is to transfer innovative ideas from the biotechnology and life sciences sectors into new sectors."

Tappeser: "Biotechnology helps us find answers to the questions of our time"

Speaking on 7th October 2009, Klaus Tappeser, Head of Department in the Baden-Württemberg Ministry of Science, Research and the Arts, highlighted the enormous importance of biotechnology in providing answers to current questions in areas such as energy production, medicine and the development of new materials. "Baden-Württemberg is very effective in the area of biotechnology. This is not only due to the power of the research location, its networking activities and the formation of clusters. Since 2003, the state-owned BIOPRO Baden-Württemberg GmbH has been promoting the transfer of technologies to industry and has been successful in bringing players from science and industry together; this is how innovation is created," said Tappeser. "Baden-Württemberg not only has the best brains, all the soft location factors are also in place." According to Tappeser, networking depends very much on the nodes in a network that keep the whole network together, and he referred to BIOPRO Baden-Württemberg and the Baden-Württemberg cluster initiatives as just such important nodes. He also congratulated BIOPRO for its success in initiating networking activities of this kind. During his visit to other BIOTECHNICA exhibitors, Tappeser gathered information about current trends in the life sciences and biotechnology.



"The culture of universities, industry and government must be to communicate with the culture of the media," said Klaus Tappeser, Head of Department in the Baden-Württemberg Ministry of Science, Education and the Arts in his welcome address to open the plenary discussion with cluster experts.

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Andreas Max Ernst receives BIOTECHNICA Study Prize

Andreas Max Ernst from the Biochemistry Centre at the University of Heidelberg was awarded the BIOTECHNICA Study Prize 2009 on 7th October 2009. Second and third prizes were awarded to Janine Hofman from the University of Jena and Ulrike Glaubitz from the Max Planck Institute of Molecular Plant Physiology in Potsdam. The prize, offered by VBIO (Association of Biology, Biosciences and Biomedicine), comes with a purse of 5,000 euros and is sponsored by the leading biotechnology company Roche.

Ernst's diploma thesis entitled "Specific protein-lipid interactions: A molecular mechanism of lipid sorting" focused on the accumulation of a specific type of lipid in COP-I vesicles. Ernst has also developed a new in vitro system that enables the investigation of specific lipid-lipid interactions in membranes. Ernst is planning to remain at the department where he did his diploma thesis in order to continue his doctorate in the group led by Prof. Felix Wieland and Dr. Britta Brügger. He has already planned a research stay abroad. His doctoral thesis will focus on viral proteins - for reasons of confidentiality, he was not able to disclose any further information about his future thesis. Ernst is also a member of the Hartmut Hoffmann-Berling International Graduate School of Molecular and Cellular Biology (HBIGS).

Strength in numbers – the exhibitors at the joint Baden-Württemberg



Prof. Reinhard Paulsen awarding the BIOTECHNICA Study Prize 2009 to Andreas Max Ernst.
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booth

As in previous years, the exhibitors at the joint Baden-Württemberg booth were largely positive about events when they gave an interim evaluation on the second day of the exhibition. Opinions ranged from "still quite a restrained number of visitors" to "high-quality contacts at the booth" and "enormous interest". Michael Statnik from the **BioLAGO** booth summarised his thoughts as follows: "We have had some excellent discussions at our booth. Many students have shown an interest in companies active in the area of environmental analytics. A particular plus here at BIOTECHNICA is that the regional players can really engage in networking. I think it is quite a positive point that the individual booths are not, as is the case at other exhibitions, organised around specific topics, but that the joint Baden-Württemberg booth enables cluster formation." Representatives at the **BioRegio STERN Management GmbH** and **TTR Technologieparks Tübingen-Reutlingen** booths pointed out that it was most important for them "to show their colours", represent companies and provide information about educational possibilities in the areas of biotechnology and the life sciences as well as engaging in networking activities.

Walter Pytlik of **BioregionUlm** found that the Forum of the joint Baden-Württemberg booth had considerably improved over last year thanks to the more informative presentations and discussions. Matthias Töws and Anja Dolderer of **nadicom** referred to a contact they had made with a French organisation, but said that they would have liked more visitors at their booth.

The company **PEPperPRINT GmbH** was a first-time exhibitor at BIOTECHNICA 2009. Dr. Ralf Bischoff, one of the four company founders, said that the exhibition was important for him because it offered him a platform for marketing and he also considered the thematic talks and networking activities to be equally important. Dr. Bastian Rapp of the **Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT)** expressed some doubts about shifting from a bi-annual to an annual exhibition, regretting that this shift seemed to reduce the number of innovations the annual exhibitors are able to present. "With respect to the fair as a whole, the BIOTECHNICA congress programme is rather positive," said Rapp adding

that some students had enquired about PhD positions, but that contacts with companies were not as numerous as in the previous year. Dr. Ludwig Witter, also from the KIT, talked about the meetings he had at BIOTECHNICA and also referred to the importance of networking activities, going on to explain that the KIT provided the basis for finding industrial partners. Representatives at the **University of Freiburg** and **BioValley** booths also gave networking and partnering as their reasons for choosing to exhibit at BIOTECHNICA. They suggested, for example, that technology transfer from research to industry should be a major topic at next year's Forum.

SensScreen Technologies and the attractiveness of the joint Baden-Württemberg booth



Biotechnica 2009, Dr. Jochen Peter, CEO SensScreen Technologies, Kathrin Waldstädt
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The majority of exhibitors at the joint Baden-Württemberg booth rate the booth, with its central infrastructure and the talks and discussions featured in its Forum, as very positive. The attractiveness (in the actual sense of the word) of the joint Baden-Württemberg booth could not be better demonstrated than by the spontaneous relocation of Dr. Jochen F. Peter and his company **SensScreen Technologies** (based in Esslingen) from a regular booth to the joint Baden-Württemberg booth during the actual exhibition.

BIOPRO Baden-Württemberg - for the 5th time at BIOTECHNICA

The numerous activities of BIOPRO Baden-Württemberg GmbH - public relations work, business development, international networking and cluster development - were presented at an own booth within the joint Baden-Württemberg platform. The numerous visitors could obtain information about the biotechnology and life sciences activities in Baden-Württemberg. In contrast to previous years, it became clear that BIOPRO no longer had to explain who they are and what they do. BIOPRO has become an established organisation and is perceived at BIOTECHNICA as a fixed factor.





The munition is right – getting closer to the goals at BIOTECHNICA

"Turning ideas into value" - the motto of BIOTECHNICA 2009 was also seized on by BIOPRO Baden-Württemberg. "With its versatile, very effective research in biotechnology and the life sciences, Baden-Württemberg holds a unique trump card for the economic development of the life sciences in the state," said Dr. Ralf Kindervater highlighting the potential of Baden-Württemberg.

"Equipped with the entire portfolio of knowledge from state-of-the-art life sciences research, we are entering industry, and are also deliberately focusing on "foreign" sectors. At BIOTECHNICA 2009, we are, together with our network partners, BioRegions and companies, presenting our potential and bringing partners from research and industry together in order to be able to advance the transfer of research results into technological products and services that will benefit all of us. Many contacts, a Forum that attracted many visitors and the support of regular BIOTECHNICA visitors from Baden-Württemberg help us achieve these goals," concluded Dr. Ralf Kindervater on BIOTECHNICA 2009.



Numerous visitors attended exciting talks and discussions at the Forum of the joint Baden-Württemberg booth.
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The second Science to Market Conference took place in Hannover, Germany, on October 6 – 7, 2009. The aim of the conference was the promotion of cooperation between academia and industry in the area of pharmaceutical biotechnology.