

**Group Exhibit Hydrogen + Fuel Cells
HANNOVER FAIR '03, April 7-12**

Statement

Taking off for the HANNOVER FAIR

**By Arno A. Evers,
organizer and initiator of the Group Exhibit Hydrogen + Fuel Cells since 1995**

Even in economically difficult times Group Exhibit Hydrogen + Fuel Cells (H₂/FC) at HANNOVER FAIR'03 succeeded in keeping exhibition space at nearly the same level as last year. Moreover, it was possible to increase the number of participating countries from last year's 10 to a total of 19. What does it tell us? It underlines the impression that the industry related to Hydrogen and Fuel Cells as well as the exhibition itself experience increased international significance.

For the first time exhibitors and Forum participants from Russia, Spain, Portugal, Iceland, Armenia, Italy, Israel, Sweden and South Korea join the Group Exhibit suggesting the following: Industrialized nations like USA, Canada, Great Britain or Germany are not the only countries working in this area of expertise. Slowly but consistently, activities seem to stretch along the globe starting a worldwide movement.

This movement takes place predominantly in regions specifically suited for the introduction of an alternative energy source. Their particular geographical location or economic situation strongly support the use of substitutes with regard to energy supply rather than depending on common resources such oil and gas. Not to forget, global political attention for climate and environmental protection is on the increase.

Then again, the suppliers for fuel cell systems have not yet succeeded in producing marketable products and applications. They are not yet capable of satisfying the worldwide demand by means of mass-commercialization. The number of testing systems and operating trials projects nevertheless increases excessively on a global scale.

Adding to delayed market entry is the never-ending discussions concerning the actual moment of commercialization is to be reached. Ranging from 2004 until 2050 this does not support a reliable assessment with regard potential commercial applications.

The process of R&D and manufacturing of customer oriented products "simply" requires patience and endurance. Once more, traditional conventions in product development seem to be more than true, also for the fuel cell industry: only those who started in time will earn the benefit. Only those from the outset will have a chance to earn their share with fuel cells in 15 years (or will it even be 20?). Only those are on the right track. who consider past and future expenses as important investments. Those, who hope for a possible bandwagon effect in ten years time are certainly mistaken. Time and means sacrificed today are wisely invested in the future in all cases.

To get acquainted with new technologies it does require a certain amount of time. At this point, it concerns most and for all SME's to take up their chances, next to many multinationals and research institutions. These new challenges ahead open up never thought of opportunities, which, at the current moment, cannot be truly assessed.

Nevertheless these considerations should not lead to a state of resignation. Quite the contrary: I am convinced of the break-through of the Fuel Cell technology! First and for all substantial innovations are to be expected in current areas of research. Optimistically, I simply assume, that fuel cells for stationary, mobile and portable applications will enter the market some time from now.

There might be even higher chances of successful innovations in entirely different fields. New services will arise which are not yet known to us and therefore cannot be demanded at

the current point in time. These services will coincidentally be powered by Hydrogen and Fuel Cells.

Another proof for my positive mind set can be found at this year's Group Exhibit Hydrogen + Fuel Cells at HANNOVER FAIR'03, April 7-12. To give an example, the group of chemical companies displaying their products and services at the Group Exhibit grew considerably from the past year. Among the exhibitors there are well-known companies, not normally associated with Hydrogen production and the development of fuel cells. It should be read as a sign that from the top 500 companies worldwide, there will be 3 out of the Top ten participating in the Group Exhibit. This development clearly suggests that there is a huge commercial potential associated with the upcoming H2/FC industry, for otherwise, these multinationals would not invest so heavily.

All in all the different discussions in the Forum, located in the center of the Group Exhibit Hydrogen + Fuel Cells during the HANNOVER FAIR'03 , April 7-12, will contribute with new approaches being discussed. Nevertheless, you cannot stop the process of commercialization for Hydrogen and Fuel cells.

For more information on the Group Exhibit Hydrogen + Fuel Cells and Arno A. Evers FAIR-PR please refer to www.fair-pr.com.

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Treffpunkt Brennstoffzelle Newsletter,
VWEW Energieverlag GmbH,

March 31 2003

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