A solid number of attendees and an optimistic atmosphere marks Momad's latest edition

By Triana Alonso - February 8, 2022

The crowds and queues of professionals returned to Momad's latest edition, which was held from last Friday, Feb. 4 to Sunday, Feb. 6. The fashion, footwear and accessories fair promoted by Ifema continues on advancing its recovery after celebrating its first post-pandemic edition held at the beginning of last September. The Bisutex, Intergift and MadridJoya events delivered synergy along with the 330 brands distributed amongst the 15,800 square metered space of the fairground’s Hall 8. Health measures were enforced amidst the pandemic's sixth wave, in which all attendees (which included 300 buyers from 35 countries) were required to present a vaccination certificate or a recent negative test, as well as having to wear FFP2 masks in order to access the fair.

"After what it had cost us to get here, we are feeling good," said Julia Gonzales (director of fashion, beauty, and lifestyle fairs of Ifema) to FashionNetwork.com, acknowledging the difficulties and uncertainty that the arrival of the omicron variant has created since September. Momad decided to keep its scheduled programming despite the virus’ new wave, which was responsible for multiple cancellations and postponements of fashion fairs in Europe. "In September we held a good transitional fair, but the roller coaster of the last few months has been horrible," said the events’ director, detailing that while Momad was able to maintain the exhibitors on schedule, Intergift (the event dedicated to gifts and decorations) suffered more ups and downs since it relied on logistical needs of assembly of stands and transportation that were affected by imposed health measures.

Despite the challenge of getting fashion trade shows back on track and living with the consequences of the pandemic, Julia Gonzalez remains optimistic. "I think this is a turning point of being able to confirm that fairs are necessary in the face of any kind of doubt about the need for physical trade shows that we might have had before," she said confidently, stressing that the fair "started off optimistic on Friday, but Saturday was definitely its highlight"
she said confidently, stressing that the fair “started off optimistic on Friday, but Saturday was definitely its highlight” and that the program for international buyers “worked very well.”

“When an exhibitor trusts us and makes the effort to come to our fair, you have to be able to respond to them. It is a great responsibility,” she said about her commitment as director of the Madrid fairs. “We have worked hard to make the visitors come with interest and quality. It is not necessary that thousands of people come, but that those who come do it to work and sign orders,” she concluded.

Newcomers Don Algodón, Compañía Fantástica and Naf Naf

Entrance queues starting from early in the morning, a traffic of visitors migrating from one pavilion to another, and corridors filled with industry professionals boosting the stands’ activity all contributed to the positive atmosphere of the event. A newcomer to this show’s edition, The Don Algodón stand by Diutex, was among the busiest. “We are experiencing a positive return to the fashion category since the relaunch a year ago,” commented the brand, celebrating its “full” stand and the presence of “many buyers”. This optimistic mindset was shared by the Danish group, Bestseller (representing its brands Only, Only & Sons, Vero Moda, Vila, Pieces, Object, Name It, and Selected), whose large stand at the entrance of Hall 8 saw an abundant number of visitors throughout the three days of the fair.

The French brand Naf Naf, which is focusing on its new expansion plan in the Spanish market, was also among the newcomers that stood out. “The first day was very positive but Saturday was essential for our business,” said Carlos Pérez, country manager of the Spanish subsidiary, owned by the Turkish Sy International company. Compañía Fantástica, who returned to the fair seven years after its last participation, also commented on its satisfaction and positive feelings about this year’s edition. Likewise, Hemper (sustainable bags and backpacks firm) was left pleased with the opportunity to speak about the brand’s committed message “in a close way” to the show’s attendees.

After speaking with the brands, two main sentiments were shared by most. The first being the need to reactivate the multi-brand channel and find new buyers following the latest store closures caused by the coronavirus crisis. The other being this edition’s improvement compared to last September’s edition, the first since the beginning of
The other being this edition’s improvement compared to last September’s edition, the first since the beginning of the pandemic in which Momad gathered 6,000 visitors and 260 exhibitors. “This edition is nothing like the previous one, which was somewhat sadder and featured fewer brands. Now there is a more optimistic opportunity for business,” said the designer of artisanal Ibiza crafts, Tony Bonet, satisfied with the “business relationships established”. “The first day of September was very successful, but activity stopped during the following days,” said Sonia Domínguez, from Fecoev. “Ibiza brands are very happy to be present and we are expecting good results,” she added. Meanwhile, the footwear sector remained a discreet presence, despite the participation of consolidated brands such as Victoria, Pons Quintana and Mascaró.

The future of trade shows: innovation contests and the meta verse

Ifema also took the opportunity to present the upcoming innovation contest in the textile and fashion sector, whose winners will be announced in September. "It is a strategic initiative to value the work of entrepreneurs in sustainability," said Julia Gonzalez, anticipating the contest’s open call in the coming weeks. "Our sector generates wealth, employment and our country’s brand image. Now we have an opportunity to contribute ideas to sustainability so that we can differentiate ourselves and provide added value through innovation, digitalization and creativity," said Ángel Asensio, president of the Spanish Confederation of Fashion, who is also a promoter of the initiative together with the consulting firm Minsait Indra.
The fair has already leaped towards digitalization since the beginning of the pandemic, which involved a hybrid format of its last September fair through the implementation of the Live Connect platform, which allowed professionals to connect beyond the actual days of the events. Ifema’s latest digital strategy, the Helixa Experience Center, takes the form of a technological and artistic installation that brings the business community closer to virtual reality opportunities, including the creation of 3D avatars for the metaverse. “Trade shows are a reality of the future. Soon, we will be able to use extended reality in professional events,” said Ifema’s director of digital business diversification, Raúl Calleja, convinced that new immersive experiences will be increasingly implemented in the event industry, making it possible to digitally visualize places, products and to interact remotely in these spaces.

Momad has already announced the dates of its next September edition: scheduled from Friday 9 to Sunday 11, while additional information remains pending. This choice of dates will help avoid its next September edition to coincide with the Parisian trade show, Who’s Next, which is scheduled to take place the first weekend of the month, a weekend prior to Intergift, MadridJoya, and Bisutex. However, Momad will still have to face the challenge of returning to its forceful stature of pre-pandemic years and, if possible, return to occupy two pavilions of the Madrid fairgrounds.

By Triana Alonso
Translated by Roberta Herrera

Copyright © 2022 FashionNetwork.com All rights reserved.