**Press Article**

SIAMS 2016 – No. 10 March 3th, 2016

**Nearly 170 Innovations to Be Presented at SIAMS 2016**

*Every two years, the world of microtechnology meets at SIAMS in Moutier. For exhibitors it is a good opportunity to present their offers to a select public in a congenial and friendly atmosphere. However, this should not obscure the fact that it is a trade fair at which actual business is done. For this new edition of the fair, the organizers have asked the exhibitors, what innovations they intend to present. Thereupon, Faji SA, the fair organizers, received a veritable flood of replies. Here is what Laurence Gygax, Customer Manager, and Pierre-Yves Kohler, CEO, said.*

On February 25th, a “round table” was held in Tramelan, focussing on the topic of innovation. Participants from the world of economy, politics, science, and industry (and the organizers of SIAMS) discussed the actual concept of innovation because, as so often, a single term covers a number of concepts.

**Innovation – Re-defined**

Innovation revolves around the idea of novelty and development. Whether you speak of a technical innovation (in big or small steps), or an organizational or marketing or sales innovation, it is always about a state of mind which needs has to target the customers. *“Why develop innovative ideas if the product presented does not meet a customer’s needs?”,* asked Marc-Alain Affolter, Chairman of the Affolter Group, on the occasion of this discussion. But if there is one point on which all parties agree, it is the idea that it is important to fit solutions to customers. That being said, innovation can be comprehensive, very expensive, or merely of a cosmetic nature. There are all possible types and they must coexist.

**Is SIAMS Innovative?**

What innovations does SIAMS offer its customers? Pierre-Yves Kohler explained: *“SIAMS is deemed to be an ideal tool for companies active in the field of microtechnology, and we have not changed anything about this. We have created tools to render our customers’ experience even more positive. Overall, it is our job as organizers of a trade fair to help them present themselves better and become more visible.”* To this end, the organizers have set up a publishing system that permits exhibitors to easily communicate their news by way of the SIAMS website and the social networks. *“Between the news published by our customers themselves and those we have directly received, nearly 170 innovations have been announced by our customers for SIAMS”,* the CEO specified.

**News of All Kinds**

Not all of the new features announced are revolutionary, but all strive to better serve a need. They range from components to machinery, equipment, tools, and materials, but also to services and subcontracting. Asked as to the actual novelty value of the solutions presented, Pierre-Yves Kohler said: *“Once again, it is a matter of defining innovation or novelty. Of course, some of these products have already been presented elsewhere, but if they are new to the visitors of SIAMS, can we call them innovations?”*

**Talented Customers**

The SMEs exhibiting at SIAMS often speak with a certain modesty as to their skills and know-how about their companies and their products, and the organizers of the fair have realized this because SIAMS is a no-nonsense fair without window dressing. You visit it to do business in a friendly setting. Unfortunately, we cannot possibly discuss all the innovations mentioned in this article. That’s why the organizers invite those interested to access the SIAMS website and plan a visit to Moutier from April 19th till April 22nd, 2016.

**SIAMS in the Service of Its Customers**

The exhibitors are customers, but their visitors are also customers, though of another category, for which the organizers also work in order to turn their visit into a success. The premises of the Forum de l’Arc cannot be changed, so the organisers must make the best of them in order to simplify the flows of visitors, to provide visitors with an easier and faster access to information or answers to their questions (and thus products and services that satisfy their needs), or restaurants and toilets. The signage was redesigned, a new café and a food truck are available and as Ms Gygax stated: *“We want our visitors to spend a truly nice day in Moutier, while seeking information and/or doing business.”*

**A Visit Is so Easy …**

For 2016, SIAMS has also renewed its ticketing system, for tickets are free for all visitors now, provided they download them online from the website of the fair. *“Can we consider this an innovation? Well, for us and for our visitors, who no longer have to wait at the entrances to the building, it is most certainly an innovation, although this technique has long been used at events all over the world”*, Pierre-Yves Kohler explained and added: *“And the fact of adding a third entrance to better distribute the flow of visitors? For the exhibitors and visitors this is most certainly an innovation, but overall it is only another door.”* The organizers recommend that visitors arrive by train, all the more so as tickets are available at a reduced price to those who have a ticket to SIAMS. A free shuttle service takes visitors from the station to the Forum de l’Arc.

**Some Numbers**

For 2016, SIAMS offers a showcase with 434 exhibitors on a net surface of 7,700 m2. This is a slight decrease in the number of exhibitors and an increase in the surface dedicated to stands. *“The average size of stands increased from slightly more than 17 m2 to about 18 m2. At the end of last year, the entire surface was already rented”,* added the Customer Manager. 34% of the exhibitors come from the nearby Jura region, 43% from the German-speaking part of Switzerland, 13% from the rest of French-speaking Switzerland and 10% from abroad: *“We are very proud to state that, with SIAMS, we do not offer a* Röstigraben*, a rift between German-speaking and French-speaking Switzerland, but a bridge between the language communities in Switzerland instead. We are opening the Romandie towards the German-speaking part of Switzerland and vice versa.”*

**Children to Help the Industry**

Why did the organizers of SIAMS establish a drawing competition for the schools of the nearby valleys? FAJI SA, the organizer of SIAMS, is participating in the #bepog project that strives to upvalue technical professions. Does the competition fit into this context? *“In our region, SIAMS is a must and an indispensable showcase of our skills and our love of work well done, and we wanted to include the children. We must all have the interests of the future generation of our industries at heart, and who knows, maybe the polytechnicians, engineers, or leaders of tomorrow will have participated in our competition. We want to turn SIAMS into a microtechnology event for the entire public. Besides, we shall also tap into #bepog at SIAMS”,* thus Pierre-Yves Kohler.

**And in 2018?**

This year, the stands were rented very quickly; within three weeks, the machine hall was completely let. For 2018, the organizers plan to reduce exceptions to the stand size. Today, the maximum stand size is 36m2, but can be increased on request. For 2018, this rule will still be upheld but the maximum stand size as an exception will probably not be more than 60 to 70 m2 compared to today’s 100 m2. As to the disposition of the stands, the organizers will introduce a pre-reservation system at this year’s event. *“Basically, we shall propose a pre-reservation system at this year’s event; any exhibitors who will use it will be given priority for 2018”*, explained Laurence Gygax.

Don’t miss the Swiss microtechnology event this spring!

SIAMS 2016

Forum de l’Arc Moutier

April 18th-22nd, 2016

09:00-17:30

[www.siams.ch](http://www.siams.ch)