

No. 8 / 2026, Cologne

## **EISENWARENMESSE - International Hardware Fair Cologne 2026: High degree of internationality and important market impulses**

**Around 33.000 trade visitors from 125 countries ++ Positive business dynamic thanks to high level of visitor quality ++ More than 90 percent foreign share of exhibitors ++ New sequence of days reinforces productive business days ++ Successful premiere of the EISENworkshop**

With around 33.000 trade visitors from 125 countries and around 2,500 exhibitors from 53 nations, the EISENWARENMESSE - International Hardware Fair 2026 gathered the global Hardware industry from 3 to 6 March in Cologne and thus confirmed its role as the world's leading trade fair of the tool and hardware industry. The event took place under challenging geopolitical conditions: the tense security situation in the Middle East led in the short term to restrictions in international air transport, which individual exhibitors and trade visitors were affected by. A warning strike in the public transport system on the last day of the fair also made mobility within Cologne more difficult. Nonetheless, international participation remained at a high level.

Four intensive trade fair days brought marketable innovations to the area, stakeholders to the table and initiated concrete business projects. The high quality of trade visitors ensured a business-oriented atmosphere on the eleven hall levels, where the entire offering diversity of the hardware world was reflected - from tools and accessories through industrial supply and fasteners and fixings to home improvement.

An over 90 percent foreign share of exhibitors and 72 percent of visitors demonstrate the international reach of the trade fair and its great relevance for industry, trade and procurement.

The new sequence of days from Tuesday to Friday was well-received by exhibitors and visitors. It underlines the clear orientation of the trade fair to efficient business days and sends a clear signal with regard to the strategic positioning of the event.

"As a central industry start, the EISENWARENMESSE - International Hardware Fair is for many companies a decisive point in time in the innovation and decision cycle. Assortments are planned, partnerships solidified and strategic courses set on location. This year's event has shown that the need for personal exchange and reliable orientation in the market environment remains consistently high", according to Oliver Frese, Chief Operating Officer of Koelnmesse GmbH. "This year's event convinced particularly with its high degree of internationality and outstanding visitor quality. With formats like the EISENworkshop, we are consistently developing



EISENWARENMESSE -  
International Hardware Fair  
Cologne  
03.03. - 06.03.2026

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the trade fair further and also shifting the target group of professional end users more into focus.“

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### **Feedback from the hardware industry**

Mr J. Wolfgang Kirchhoff, Chairman of the Executive Board and CEO of the KIRCHHOFF Group and WITTE Tools emphasises the international reach of the trade fair and its importance as a reliable meeting point for the industry: "The EISENWARENMESSE - International Hardware Fair in Cologne was already characterised by its internationality for us from the start. We were able to start interesting new projects with existing as well as new customers from Asia and North America. The most recent events in the Middle East once again show how important and secure the Cologne fair grounds are and, beyond this, that we, as German tool manufacturers, ensure not only quality but also stable supply chains!"

The importance of the trade fair for a direct exchange with the retail trade is also emphasised by Björn Watzlawik, Vice President Sales Germany at Robert Bosch Power Tools: "The EISENWARENMESSE - International Hardware Fair 2026 was a valuable platform for us to promote a personal dialogue with the retail trade, to maintain existing partnerships and take away new impulses. We are especially pleased that we were able to show our holistic Bosch power tools portfolio from PRO to DIY in all product segments and make innovations like our new EXPERT performance category experienceable live. We look back at successful days in Cologne and look forward to helping shape the future of the industry."

The trade fair also remains an important component of international customer relations for exhibitors of many years. Alexander Alberts, Managing Partner of Gust. Alberts GmbH & Co. KG, declares: "The EISENWARENMESSE - International Hardware Fair is this year once again a place for encounter and exchange for us. For decades, we have appreciated the high quality conversations with customers and industry partners from all over the world that we are able to conduct in this unique framework.“

The continuing development of the trade fair and the new sequence of days are also positively evaluated by the retail trade. Dr Peter Wüst, Managing Director of the Retailers' Association for Home Improvement, Building and Gardening e.V. (BHB) has this to say: "The EISENWARENMESSE - International Hardware Fair is changing - and that's a good thing! The new sequence of days considers the needs of exhibitors and visitors - and makes the weekend a protected space. Innovations, safety, user comfort, sustainability, the industry focus DIY Boulevard as well as many events and award ceremonies make this trade fair an indispensable MUST for all those who wish to join together to orient the industry and its companies to customers and market needs and are thereby also seeking an intensive exchange in addition to products and solutions.“

### **Trend barometer 2026: focus on sustainability, digitalisation and efficiency**

The EISENWARENMESSE - International Hardware Fair 2026 set clear accents in terms of content and thus provided an outlook onto the future orientation of the industry.

Sustainability and recycling solutions were present, just as much as ergonomic

concepts and solutions for health protection. Safety-optimised tools, compact, high-performance products as well as multifunctional applications reflect the increasing requirements in professional use.

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Parallel with this, digitalisation is advancing visibly: intelligent technologies, networked systems, smart control systems and AI-based applications are increasingly defining the product portfolio. Design and product aesthetics are also developing into clear differentiation features in competition. Manufacturers are thereby reacting to changed market conditions, efficiency pressure and new user expectations.

### **63 submissions, three prize winners: EISENaward 2026 presented**

The EISENaward, which was already presented for the eighth time in cooperation with the Central Association of the Hardware Trade e. V. (ZHH) at the EISENforum at the start of the trade fair, sends a strong signal for the innovation power of the hardware industry. 63 submissions from 15 countries underline the international relevance of the competition. A jury from trades, research, design, press, multipliers and the retail trade distinguished the three most groundbreaking product innovations.

With the winning product 'Crimp Counter', Weidmüller presented a smart solution for the recording and documentation of crimp procedures. The system enables precise planning of maintenance intervals and thus contributes to quality assurance and to the extension of the service life of the tool in professional use.

The 'ECOSAW' from G-Man is a fully recyclable hand saw system with patented blade-change technology. The light, durable grip, four exchangeable standard blades and a 100 percent recyclable construction including packaging combine functionality with consistent sustainability.

With the 'ABUS Everox One 61/55 G3', an intelligent padlock from August Bremicker Söhne was distinguished. This is controlled per Bluetooth through the ABUS One app. Certified pursuant to EN16864 Grade 3 (G3) and SSF Class 2, it offers a high degree of security, flexible usage possibilities indoors and outdoors as well as digital access control.

All nominated products as well as the winners were exhibited in a special area in Passage 10/11 and met with great interest from the trade public.

### **EISENWARENMESSE - International Hardware Fair expands knowledge and practice offerings**

As a central knowledge and dialogue platform, the EISENforum offered a varied programme extending beyond the award ceremony with lectures and panels on current industry themes. One special area of focus was the theme of 'Artificial Intelligence'. The related trade programme was curated by the digital expert Michael Atug. The offering was supplemented by the BME Buyer Day and an E-commerce Day, which offered insights from leading companies of the industry with practical relevance. The EISENforum in this way emphasised the role of the EISENWARENMESSE - International Hardware Fair as a platform for well-founded

knowledge transfer and professional exchange.

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With the new EISENworkshop, the trade fair concept was deliberately expanded in 2026 with an application-oriented practice format. International creators from different trade segments demonstrated the use of modern tools and technologies from the exhibitor portfolio live on the basis of a variety of projects and thus assured media reach, among other aspects. The realistic applications and the direct incorporation of the audience met with a great response, especially from professional end users.

The DIY Boulevard, which was already fully booked well in advance, realised in cooperation with the German Association of Home & Garden Manufacturers e.V. (HHG), once again presented itself as an established platform for POS-related product staging. The retail trade and procurement received a compact market overview here, as well as inspiration for assortment design and the presentation of goods.

#### **EISENWARENMESSE - International Hardware Fair 2026 in figures**

2,500 companies from 53 countries, 91 percent of them from abroad, participated in the EISENWARENMESSE - International Hardware Fair Cologne 2026. Including estimates for the last day of the trade fair, around 33.000 visitors from 125 countries came to EISENWARENMESSE - International Hardware Fair 2026. The international share of trade visitors was 72 percent.

**The next EISENWARENMESSE - International Hardware Fair will take place from 7 to 10 March 2028 in Cologne - once again from Tuesday to Friday. Companies can register for the coming event as of now via the [official website](#).**

**Koelnmesse - industry trade fairs for the hardware sector:** As a premier international trade fair organiser, Koelnmesse is the global market leader for events in the tools and hardware sector. Cologne is home to the EISENWARENMESSE - INTERNATIONAL HARDWARE FAIR, the world's leading trade fair for the industry. Asia-Pacific Sourcing, the largest sourcing platform outside Asia, also showcases its products there. In addition, Koelnmesse is expanding its international portfolio in key markets - the China International Hardware Show in Shanghai, International Hardware Fair Italy in Bergamo, International Hardware Fair India in New Delhi and International Hardware Fair Colombia in Bogotá are tailored events and leading regional trade fairs with international participation. In 2025, two new formats were launched in dynamic regions - International Hardware Fair Indonesia in Jakarta and International Hardware Fair Saudi Arabia in Riyadh. As part of the ongoing development of its hardware portfolio in strategically relevant growth markets, Koelnmesse has also added the Central Asia International Hardware Expo to its event programme, with the first edition scheduled for November 2026 in Tashkent, Uzbekistan: [www.hardware-worldwide.com](http://www.hardware-worldwide.com).

#### **The next events:**

International Hardware Fair Saudi Arabia - Saudi Arabia's largest trade fair for the hardware and tools sector, Riyadh 15.06. - 17.06.2026

International Hardware Fair Indonesia - powered by EISENWARENMESSE, Jakarta

24.09. - 27.09.2026

China International Hardware Show - Leading Trade Fair for Tools, DIY and Building Hardware, Fasteners, Security Systems, Locks and Fittings, Shanghai 28.09. - 30.09.2026

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**Note for editorial offices:**

EISENWARENMESSE - INTERNATIONAL HARDWARE FAIR photos are available in our image [database](#).

Press information can be found [here](#).

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at [www.eisenwarenmesse.com](http://www.eisenwarenmesse.com), on [LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#).

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