

MY COMMENTS ON HICAP AND ITB ASIA - 2008!



HICAP HONG KONG

My comments on the Investment Conference (HICAP) in Hong Kong are that the theme for the conference they had initially had planned changed to “**Don’t Get Nervous**”. Saying that, everyone who attended acted as if everything was “same, same”. In fact, one could see the concern in most delegates’ eyes, as they stole glances at their blackberries to check on their company’s stock prices and to see if they still had a job to go home to. Everyone gave the appearance of doing well. Yet, there were more resumes passed around than I have ever seen before!

I think overall, the conference was positive. I believe many preferred not to attend and stay home and make a difference in their own company’s future, rather than discussing projects that ***probably will never get off the ground!***

ITB SINGAPORE

I felt that the ITB was a disappointment. Having been to the ITB in Berlin 25 times, I had great expectations of a similar size show in Singapore. Unfortunately, instead of the 27 halls like the ITB in Berlin, the ITB in Singapore had one large hall (about 250 booths) and most of the exhibitors were from the Asian region. I saw no one whom I would not have seen at any other trade fairs in Asia.

I also felt that the entrance fee of US\$120 for “trade” for a smaller size show seemed steep. I assume the organizers Messe Berlin, who also manage the ITB in Berlin, felt that their reputation was enough to fill the halls. Unfortunately, the recent financial crisis, plus the fact that the cost for each booth was quite high, kept away potential exhibitors.

If I was one of the planners for this show, I would have had “honeymoon rates” for the first year. In other words, keep the exhibitors’ costs low and give almost free entrance fees to all trade visitors. This way, the show would have been “hyped” for next year. Instead, I am sure a lot of visitors and exhibitors would think twice about next year, based on the size and costs for this year.

Renard International will still attend the ITB Asia in 2009, since we will support any exhibition that promotes our industry!