

Spring Fair 2012 Review - NEC

Feedback from members was mixed, the majority were pleased with the quality of buyers attending although all concurred that independent numbers were down on last year. The snow on the Sunday certainly impacted visitor numbers.

For those members that use the show to write orders the majority reported sales up or level with last year while a minority declared orders down on the previous year. All felt independents were being more cautious and that value of orders placed in the main were smaller than previous years.

There was a positive atmosphere in the hall and recognition was given to the fact that the re-location to Hall 1 had worked as the overall feel was more impressive with well laid out stands, easy to walk aisles and improvements had been made to catering venues and the introduction of rest stops was well received.

There was frustration that Wi-Fi was only available in "hotspots" areas. Concerns that the "lifestyle" area is not good enough to attract contemporary brands/suppliers into Hall 1 and the migration to Summerhouse will continue.

The overseas buyer event on the Monday was well attended and positive feedback received from members. There is a perception that Emap are working hard to attract more international visitors. A meeting was held with the new Emap Group MD - Mark Shashoua and Louise Young to provide feedback from a BHETA perspective. At a follow up meeting with Emap I met with Rob Lozowski, who will be replacing Roz Mc Guinness as the new Kitchen & Dining Event Director for Spring and Autumn Fairs. Rob will be responsible for the implementation of Autumn Fair 2012.

A number of Housewares members joined BHETA at the RDT fundraiser party held on the Monday evening at the Motorcycle museum, highlights of the evening included Kate from Rayware winning an Apple I-pad in the raffle and John Newcomb winning a case of champagne for being last man standing in the quiz. It was not a fix !