**Press release**

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Roto will not be attending “Fensterbau Frontale” 2020 / Interview with Marcus Sander: factual arguments influence decision / Head of Window and Door Technology on trade fair postponement and the consequences of the coronavirus outbreak / Back again in 2022 / Health before business / Losses to date in China more than offset / Active information sharing with customers and partners

**“Our waiver is result of exceptional circumstances.”**

***Leinfelden-Echterdingen – (rp)*** NürnbergMesse’s last-minute decision to postpone the “Fensterbau Frontale” trade fair to 16th to 19th June 2020 amid the growing global outbreak of coronavirus is an unprecedented scenario for all stakeholders, including – or particularly – exhibitors. In the following interview, Marcus Sander explains how Roto Frank Window and Door Technology (FTT) is handling the situation. The Chairman of the Board of Directors outlines the internationally focussed hardware specialist’s view of the latest development and why he is choosing not to attend this year.

 What is your fundamental view of the decision to postpone the trade fair because of the coronavirus outbreak?

**Sander:** It was absolutely the right decision, it was completely understandable and there really was no alternative. Needless to say, we were greatly looking forward to meeting customers and prospects from all over the world face-to-face in mid-March in Nuremberg and showing them practical examples of our comprehensive systems expertise. However, the health and safety of our employees and guests comes first.

 The trade fair company has recently announced a new date for “Fensterbau Frontale”: 16th to 19th June 2020. What does that mean for Roto as an exhibitor?

**Sander:** From the contact we had with the trade fair company, there were already indications that these dates would be the likely alternative. In this regard, we were able to deal with this at an early stage, weigh up the arguments against each other and carry out an “urgent survey” worldwide in our sales offices. For a global player like Roto, the international nature of the trade fair is the key success factor for “Frontale”. In this regard, we consider the results of our internal research to be sobering. They gave cause for concern that the number of our international visitors in June would drastically drop compared to the previous event in 2018. The main reason for this was that there are major doubts as to whether it would be possible to travel without any risk of infection due to the development of the coronavirus. For Roto, putting people’s health at risk is absolutely out of the question. This is why, after carefully weighing up all the factors, we have decided not to attend “Fensterbau Frontale” this year.

**Economic responsibility**

 Are there other reasons why you will not be attending the trade fair?

**Sander:** Of course, we also have to consider the business side of things. The fact is, we have already spent a seven-figure sum. This is primarily the result of many contractual obligations we had to fulfil. Attending the trade fair in June would have led to further significant expenses. We don’t think this would be acceptable for Roto, particularly at a time of major uncertainty worldwide regarding future business development. For this reason, our decision is based on economic responsibility for the company, its owners and its staff.

 Is your recent decision your way of saying a general “no” to the industry trade fair at the same time?

**Sander:** Not at all. The Roto team is already looking forward to March 2022, when it hopes to once again put all its effort into welcoming many national and international visitors to the same place in Hall 1 of the Nuremberg exhibition grounds, where it will be providing information and advice. In 2020, we are experiencing a unique situation which we have to respond to. Nothing more and nothing less.

**Financial consequences manageable at present**

 Let’s stick with the “unique situation”: fears that the coronavirus is putting more considerable strain on the already weak global economy are constantly growing. Companies are announcing profit warnings on these grounds almost daily. Is Roto also feeling negative effects on its business? And what do you expect will happen?

**Sander:** Because of the problems associated with coronavirus, particularly in production, we are currently losing revenue in China. It remains to be seen whether we manage to offset the decrease again in the course of the year. At the moment, production seems to be slowly getting back to normal. Fortunately, FTT business did well overall in the first two months of the year. In fact, we more than compensated for the revenue losses in China due to strong figures in other areas of the business. So although there definitely are consequences from the coronavirus crisis, they are manageable for Roto at present. However, I don’t think the outbreak has reached its peak globally yet.

 You mentioned that Roto takes its responsibility for health and safety very seriously, particularly in this situation. How are you translating this into actual precautionary measures to protect against the virus?

**Sander:** I think we have taken a highly professional approach in this respect. It ranges from continually updated status reports from the worst-affected countries, right through to a variety of travel restrictions and a ban on meetings with more than ten people. Employees with laptops and work phones are taking their devices home with them in the evening so they can work from home if necessary. Attendance at events where there are more than 200 people should also be avoided wherever possible until further notice and is defined in an approval process.

**Dialogue using different channels**

 Let’s go back to the trade fair. What did Roto’s Window and Door Technology division have in store for German and international trade visitors in March?

**Sander:** We wanted to show them how our advanced hardware systems provide practical benefits for customers in concrete terms with a stand design that was completely new architecturally. In place of a purely product-focused demonstration, our stand was to offer a full room-based experience to show the performance characteristics and effects in a truly “realistic” way. Since Roto caters to all opening types and frame materials around the world, we would have made the extensive range of application and installation options offered by our integrated portfolio tangible and visible to visitors.

 How do you now plan to communicate your comprehensive trade fair content to your target groups?

**Sander:** Our international sales teams will of course stay in contact “locally” with current and potential customers to keep them informed. That will take the form of face-to-face discussions, but increasingly we will also use the channels open to us through modern digital communication. In fact, coronavirus has nothing to do with this essentially: phone and video conferences are tried-and-tested forms of communication – and they aren’t necessarily impersonal.

**Caption**

Marcus Sander explains in an interview how Roto Frank Window and Door Technology (FTT) is handling the new situation after the postponement of “Fensterbau Frontale”. The Chairman of the Board of Directors outlines the internationally focussed hardware specialist’s view of the latest development, why he is choosing not to attend this year, which topics it was originally planning to showcase at the trade fair, and how they will now be communicated to market partners. A key message: “Health before business”.

**Photo:** Roto **Marcus\_Sander.jpg**

Note to the editors: A separate interview with Marcus Sander at the

beginning of calendar week 12 will provide details of the originally

planned trade fair focal points.

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