

All Eyes on U.S.

This year's Hannover Messe will be an important one for the United States. As this year's partner country, we'll be at the center of the trade show's already impressive festivities.

Alex Cannella, News Editor

Hannover Messe always promises to be one of the landmark trade shows of the year. Their massive attendance numbers are no secret. In 2015, they saw 6,500 exhibitors and 220,000 trade visitors, and they boast that 68 percent of their visitors are decision makers. In recent years, the show has built a tradition showcasing the latest Industry 4.0 advances and technology, and this year continues that tradition. The theme, Integrated Industry - Discover Solutions, will make an effort to show off concrete, practical examples of the Industrial Internet across numerous fields ranging from energy solutions to predictive maintenance.

But this year is also going to be even bigger than usual. The show's expanded to include another exhibition hall. The Industrial Internet Consortium (IIC), an international, U.S. based organization working to establish standards for the Industrial Internet, will be in attendance for the first time.

Oh, and President Obama is going to

be there, too.

Far and away the biggest news surrounding Hannover Messe 2016 is that this year's partner country will be none other than the United States, a first in the trade show's history. This not only firmly places the global industrial spotlight on the U.S., but also means that this year is particularly worth following, or even attending. The show is already expecting over 250 U.S. exhibitors (more than double the usual number), as well as a personal visit from the President himself to open the show. For every major topic being covered at the show this year, there will be a U.S.-centric pavilion and joint stand to provide a natural meeting place for networking opportunities, as well as another pavilion in hall 3 for investors interested in U.S. companies (and, of course, companies looking for investors) to flock to.

"The United States is proud to be the partner country," U.S. Ambassador John B. Emerson said at January's pre-show press conference. "This will offer

the American delegation maximum exposure and numerous face-to-face opportunities to connect to the global industrial technology marketplace and discover new business prospects."

For anyone seeking investors, looking for new customers or expanding their exports, Hannover Messe 2016 is almost a no-brainer. This year's show is giving U.S. businesses every opportunity to network and make international contacts, sales and investments. If ever there was a year to care about Hannover Messe, this is the one, because this year, Hannover Messe cares about you.

Partner country status notwithstanding, there's still plenty of reason to pay attention to Hannover Messe, foremost amongst them being the theme, Integrated Industry - Discover Solutions. The Industrial Internet has been a rising force in industry the past few years, but still remains a nebulous, vague topic in many minds.

Hannover Messe's Press Team Leader, Onuora Ogbukagu, put it best: "I think you'll agree with me if I say that everybody's talking about the factory of the future, everybody's trying to figure out how digitalization of the industry will change manufacturing, but nobody really has a clue where the journey is going."

This year's theme is focusing on clarifying our vision of that journey. With over 100 practical examples on display of Industry 4.0 technology already in use today across numerous fields, Hannover Messe is looking to present a concrete view of what the future has in store, and why you should buy into it.

The unique crossroads Industry 4.0 is currently at makes this theme timely. We're at the point where the Industrial Internet is becoming a big deal, and everyone is scrambling to implement it, but at the same time, a lot of the tech





is fresh, and nobody quite knows how to use it best. Even at Hannover Messe itself, Industry 4.0 has been discussed and hyped at length, but this is the deepest they've ever gone into the nitty gritty details, and no doubt a wealth of curated examples of Industrial Internet processes will be a welcome addition to the show.

The trade show is presenting its theme in five sub-categories. Industrial Automation focuses on automation technology and how it relates to Industry 4.0, while the Digital Factory looks at the IT and software side of the equation. Energy will focus on the energy industry, promising to show every part of the industry value chain from generation to distribution and beyond. Industrial Supply looks at new technologies and solutions emerging for industrial supply chains. Finally, Research & Technology will take a look at what lies beyond today's emerging tech, touching on everything from bionics to nanotechnology. Predictive maintenance will also get its place in the spotlight.

"Here, Integrated Industry is more exciting than ever," Dr. Jochen Köckler, one of Deutsche Messe's managing board members, said at January's press conference. "It's not just looking at the question of whether we will feel it or what kind of impact it will have. Here, you will find your solutions on your journey of discovery."

Hannover Messe is also bringing back the Industry 4.0 Forum, which

attracted 6,600 visitors last year. The forum will be headed by the IIC, the German Engineering Federation (VDMA) and the German Electrical and Electronic Manufacturers' Association (ZVEI), but many attending exhibitors will also be filling out the ranks of experts. A wide range of topics will be discussed, but a few of the highlights will be standards of communication between devices, IT security, Cloud technology, and business models based off of Big Data.

Also being enthusiastically pushed are the two hour guided tours, which Hannover Messe is expanding. Each tour covers the broad strokes of one of the trade show's main themes and visits selected booths. They should be

particularly useful for those looking for a primer in one particular field and will provide some of those aforementioned concrete examples of the Industrial Internet at work.

Even if you can't attend this year's Hannover Messe, it will undoubtedly be worth tuning in to from home. Once a year, the world's collective gaze always rests on Hannover, but this year, it will also be firmly fixed on us. All of Hannover Messe's usual selling points - the massive crowds, the business and networking opportunities, the wealth of knowledge practically being handed out, and bleeding edge technology from around the world - are magnified this year by the United States' partner country status. By partnering up with the biggest trade show in Europe, U.S. businesses will uniquely be at the heart of this year's show, and when doing business, there's no better place to be. **PTE**

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