

Wind Energy Asia 2021, the integration of virtual and reality creates dazzling results

Taiwan's first hybrid physical and virtual exhibition showcases the vigorous energy of the wind industry

Wind Energy Asia, Taiwan's first hybrid physical and virtual exhibition and forum, despite the pandemic, was held live in the Kaohsiung Exhibition Center from March 10-12, 2021. A total of 114 industry players from 10 countries/regions participated in the exhibition. Among them, Denmark, the Netherlands, Germany and Sweden had country pavilions.

An innovative online to offline platform allowed exhibitors to have physical booths in the venue complemented by an O2O (online-to-offline) virtual one on the platform. Visitors came in person if in Taiwan, or virtually from anywhere in the world. This allowed foreigners to avoid travel restrictions, bringing more buyers and business opportunities. The platform is still available until April 14, 2021. The 3-day exhibition, including online and offline, attracted a total of 9,316 visitors from 52 countries, fully demonstrating the vigorous energy of Taiwan's wind industry.

In order to help with the localization in the wind industry, WEA 2021 also held a forum to discuss the current development and future trends. 32 domestic and foreign industry leaders and scholars gave speeches from the stage. Key opinions came from the Bureau of Energy, Industrial Development Bureau, Taiwan Construction Research Institute, Taiwan Wind Industry Association, Awareocean Technology, GCWA, CIP, RWE, Siemens Gamesa and many others. All forum sessions were streamed online and the forum language was English, with only a handful of Mandarin presentations being translated. Taiwan's wind energy industry must connect with the world.

As the largest and most international wind energy exhibition in Taiwan, the organizer specially invited GCWA, RWE and other specialized suppliers to present on the subject of floating wind. This high-level topic is poised to be a key feature for Taiwan and offshore in general, allowing wind farms to develop in water over 50m deep. There were even scaled models in the venue for visitors to admire. The Job Fair allowed graduates and students interested in wind energy careers to learn and evaluate employment opportunities. Companies could find suitable candidates and help expand the talent base in Taiwan, a crucial stepping-stone on the road to becoming an important base for the industry in Asia!

Many key exhibitors expressed their satisfaction with the event:

Dr. Kuo-Hong Wu, Vice President, Smart Frequency Technology: “This event is different from others we participate in at home and abroad. Here exhibitors are linked with each other and the customer base is much more targeted. In the process of their industrial restructuring, companies leverage each other's strengths to find solutions and business opportunities. It's great to see the support it already has!”

Tom Manning, Deputy General Manager, CWind Taiwan: “Happy to be exhibitors and sponsors for a third consecutive year. Despite the pandemic, WEA is important in our annual calendar due to its supply chain focus. We look forward to supporting in 2022 and plan to bring elements of our training right into the hall, since skill shortage and training are key challenges the industry faces in Taiwan.”

Yu-Foong Chong, Head of Business Development, RWE Renewables Taiwan: “The networking events in the evenings are great and from these conversations many opportunities arise. No doubt that WEA is one of the main events in Asia. We will be back.”

Paolo De Berardinis, Asia Pacific Director, FACCIN GROUP: “As you know I was a bit skeptical about being a virtual exhibitor this year, not being able to be in Kaohsiung, but once I got used to it, from my office in Singapore, I could see the people walk by my booth, wave at them, have a business conversation and even show them some presentations. Very useful and different indeed.”

The 2022 exhibition and forum will be held from March 9-11. 17 domestic and foreign exhibitors have registered in advance. Exhibitors interested in grabbing a share of the Asia wind energy market should mark their calendars and join the event!