



Latest Blog from Protean - A 5-hour Industry Snapshot at SMT

This past Wednesday was a bit of a push as I embarked on a fleeting journey to support some of our clients at the SMT show in Germany, one of the premier electronics events in the European industry calendar.

First off is that the only direct flight departs Gatwick at 8.00am, not exactly the crack of dawn, and with mainland Europe one hour ahead of BST, you arrive at the Nuremberg trade halls just before noon. To catch the return flight means leaving the halls before 5.00pm. That's less than five hours to get through three sets of press meetings, which leaves precious little time to browse the other exhibits.

That's not a problem; I'm pretty familiar with the rigours of trade shows and lost count of how many I've attended long ago. But I hadn't been to SMT Nuremberg for almost a decade, so was keen to catch up.

As ever, the press meeting schedule was demanding. That's the norm, and is why our clients appreciate our support. Then a couple of deep conversations about marketing initiatives going forward, notably SEO: it's a hot topic and one of our strengths. Finally a moment to gauge impressions of the show from exhibitors. I'm told Tuesday was slow and there was some disappointment about that. Wednesday looked quiet to me, but many exhibitors experienced visitors with a firm agenda to purchase, so most were happy.

A couple of issues were raised about the timing of the event. We'd had a bank holiday in the UK on Monday which may have impacted on visitor traffic. France had a public holiday on Tuesday, the first show day. One of my clients, Fred at Totech, remarked that he'd only seen one Frenchman all day! Despite that, he was pleased with the show. Jos from Totech was looking to conquer the German market. Henk at MEK was also very positive, but then he always is! Rehm was on home turf and had a striking presence at SMT: theirs was among the largest stands in the hall. Despite its size and generous seating arrangements, the place was rammed, leaving standing-room only. Mind you, they did have a rather lovely ice cream cart on the booth...

I managed a quick excursion around the rest of the show – or I thought I had. So here's some advice to the organisers: don't leave an empty hall in the middle of the event! Those of you familiar with the Nuremberg venue will know the layout of the halls. While cruising the show, I came to Hall 8 to find it empty. So I turned back, as most people probably would. Apparently, Hall 9 was occupied with more exhibits. Who knew?

The show appeared to have delivered on its promise and it was a great opportunity to meet the press. We don't get many chances to have one-to-one press meetings these days. Long lunches are definitely a thing of the past. It's hard to work out how we used to have so much time.

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