

Media release

Restructuring measures at BERNEXPO AG due to coronavirus pandemic

Bern, 28.10.2020 – BERNEXPO AG faces an extraordinary economic situation due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic. Further restructuring measures must be implemented to cope with this situation. In addition to further reduced working hours, jobs will have to be cut as well. CEO Jennifer Somm is leaving the company at her own request.

The restructuring measures are designed to ensure that BERNEXPO AG can continue its core business in this uncertain period and quickly harness the coming post-crisis recovery for healthy growth. In doing so, it will continue to successfully advance the further development of the company as the leading live communications company in Switzerland, which is a key player in the trade fair and event industry. There will be job cuts in addition to further reduced working hours. The company aims to at least break even again in 2021 despite the pandemic.

Jennifer Somm is leaving BERNEXPO at her own request and in mutual agreement with her employer, BERNEXPO AG. She joined the company as CEO in 2017. Jennifer Somm gave this venerable trade fair company a forward-looking and innovative direction. Under her operational leadership, the live-marketing company BERNEXPO, which specialises in trade fairs, conventions and events, became the second-largest trade fair venue in Switzerland. Thanks to her considerable commitment, established and new trade fair formats, such as INNOTEQ (formerly Prodex), HeroFest and BLE.CH, were successfully acquired, improved or launched. Around 30 exhibitions and guest exhibitions as well as over 300 conventions, events and guest events were organised in 2019 on the exhibition grounds of BERNEXPO, an area of over 140,000 square metres in size. Jennifer Somm will be available to the company for various projects until April 2021.

Franziska von Weissenfluh, Co-Chair of the Board of Directors of BERNEXPO AG, expresses her gratitude to Jennifer Somm on behalf of the Board of Directors for her dedicated development and leadership work, her loyal dedication and for her always constructive cooperation. The Board of Directors regrets Jennifer Somm's decision and wishes her continued professional as well as personal success. As interim CEO, Ernst Bruderer will take over the management of the company, ensure stability and implement the necessary restructuring measures. Ernst Bruderer, aged 67, has extensive management experience and specialises in SME management and restructuring.

The BERNEXPO GROUPE faces the new challenges head-on

In order to consolidate and expand its position as an innovative leader in the live-marketing sector, BERNEXPO intends to stay on the course it has been on for some time. The focus is on growing the core business by adding new, digital business areas. The aim is to offer trade fair and event visitors not only the live moment they are looking for, but also useful digital services via state-of-the-art mobile communication channels.

For enquiries, please contact:

Peter Stähli, Co-Chair of the Board of Directors BERNEXPO AG

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About the BERNEXPO GROUPE

Every year, the live communications company BERNEXPO GROUPE plans, realises and holds more than 30 exhibitions and guest exhibitions and over 300 congresses, trade shows and other events of all sizes. Live communication allows the BERNEXPO GROUPE to deliver memorable moments, create spaces where people can come together and offer a wide variety of platforms. The BERNEXPO site is one of Switzerland's largest exhibition premises. Eight exhibition halls across two building complexes offer around 40,000 square metres of event floor space and 100,000 square metres of outdoor areas. The BERNEXPO GROUPE employs around 130 people. Generating a gross added value of around CHF 260 million, it is a leading economic driving force for the city and region of Bern – with a nationwide impact.