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Industry backs ILM – buoyant order business and stimuli for the future

ILM Edition #161, held from 15 to 17 February in Offenbach, once again demonstrated: The trade fair is not only the most important order platform for fashionable bags, luggage, school satchels, and accessories, but is also a unique international platform for personal interaction. ILM is where the whole international industry gets together. Arnd Hinrich Kappe, Managing Director of Messe Offenbach, explained the concept, which is continuously being developed further: “There has been a massive change in exhibitor and visitor expectations in recent years. ILM has always been famous as one of the top international order fairs. But that on its own is now no longer sufficient. We have progressed from being purely an order fair and have become a platform for communication and strategy. Offenbach is where the future of the industry is fashioned.”

There was a strong focus at ILM #161 on the close interconnectedness of trade and industry, innovation and inspiration. As a central communication forum, the FUTURE HUB provided exhibitors and visitors with practical insights, inspiring panel discussions, and trend talks, preparing the trade ideally to launch into the new buying season. The afterwork parties with live background music in the Messe Offenbach foyer on the Saturday and Sunday offered the perfect platform for personal, face-to-face interaction.

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NEWCOMERS AND REAPPEARANCES

Around 300 brands from 25 countries presented their new collections for Autumn/Winter 2025/26, with many longstanding top-name exhibitors among them as well as newcomers and reappearances. “This was the first time we were at ILM with our brands Tamaris and Suri Frey, with the specific aim of winning new customers. The concept is paying off. We appreciate the setting and the great organisation,” said Oliver Lamm of Mei er Lederwaren. The lifestyle label Bugatti was back again at ILM for the first time after a gap of seven years. “We are highly satisfied. Our brand has a powerful charisma, and we were able to greet many new customers at the fair – a good number of them from abroad,” commented a delighted Jannice Boss.

The curated mix of brands whisks visitors off on an inspiring journey. The concept: In “boutique character”, trendy accessories such as jewellery, travel scooters, smart gadgets, and lifestyle articles were stylistically integrated in the various halls, thus ensuring many an element of surprise. “Following a concept store notion, we are offering retailers new ideas for high-margin additions to their product range that are easy and profitable for them to implement in their business,” Arnd Hinrich Kappe expanded further.

A mood of optimism and a buoyant placing of orders – that was the unanimous impression after the three-day fair in Offenbach. ILM is and remains the most important marketplace for the leather goods, accessories, and luggage industries. The Saturday and Sunday witnessed vigorous business especially in international terms. Besides the classic leather goods retail trade, more and more shoe and textile

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retailers and buyers from well-known department and concept stores now attend the fair seeking bags, luggage, and accessories to augment their range. The compact presentation of all key brands and collections in a single location has caught on well.

RED WINE AND CHOCOLATE

What trends are in demand for Autumn/Winter 2025/26? Here too, ILM's curated brand portfolio has a clear answer on offer. In terms of colour, deep shades of red and nuances of brown from camel and cognac to mocha are breathing fresh inspiration into the collections. And the motto for the latest handbags is: functionality encounters femininity. The emphasis is on shoppers and bowling bags in medium formats. The trend is towards fluffiness: In challenging times, plush and teddy along with novel decorations such as playful charms, bright bandanas, and bows aim to – and will – spread good cheer.

NEW TRENDS IN AUTUMN

The next ILM Edition #162 will take place from 30 August to 01 September 2025.

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