**EXPO RIVA SCHUH & GARDABAGS GAINS MOMENTUM**

**The Riva del Garda event concludes with 9,000 attendees, consistent with January 2024 figures, from approximately 100 countries. Exhibitor satisfaction exceeded expectations, with 1,100 participants from 36 countries reporting excellent outcomes, while the 19 business-oriented events enjoyed a large turnout.**

**A bright future is anticipated for the event, marked by the announcement of a new Gardabags format and plans to expand the exhibition centre.**

When navigating sharp turns, it’s crucial to avoid braking to maintain your trajectory, then accelerate confidently as you exit. A principle well understood by the organisers of Expo Riva Schuh & Gardabags, who today **wrap up an edition marked by strong results** despite challenging market conditions. While the global economic downturn has posed difficulties, the event showcased its strength in **fostering a thriving community**. Riva del Garda continues to be a hub where commercial partnerships and enduring human connections flourish, **transcending cultural differences**.

Expo Riva Schuh & Gardabags remains a vital platform for facilitating business opportunities, connecting supply with demand, offering insights into consumer trends, exploring major international markets and presenting retail innovations.

Most importantly, it **continues to invest in and anticipate the future**. This June will see the launch of an innovative Gardabags format, while the next two years will see the start of works to expand the exhibition centre.

**A BUSINESS AND COMMUNITY HUB**

The number of attendees remained stable, matching January 2024’s **9,000 visitors**.

Buyers had the opportunity to explore collections from **1,100 exhibitors**, including companies and brands.

A total of **19 events** provided industry professionals with essential insights into market trends, business opportunities and developments.

Figures that underscore how Expo Riva Schuh & Gardabags serves as an indispensable benchmark for the footwear and accessories industry and beyond. According to **Alessandra Albarelli, General Manager of Riva del**

**Garda Fierecongressi**:

“Being the first to **open the Winter 2025/26 season** is undoubtedly a winning strategy, highly valued by buyers. Even in this 102nd edition, the extensive array of international collections, coupled with suppliers offering both private label and branded production – in a variety of quality and price ranges – has proven to be the key to success.”

A sentiment echoed by buyers, such as **Tracy Tao from Yifu Garment in China**: “I represent the largest clothing retailer in China with 3,500 stores. Last year, we expanded into Western markets with three stores in Paris and one in New York. Here in Riva del Garda, we are seeking high-quality European-made fashion accessories, shoes and bags at competitive prices – a key requirement. Our goal is to increase the average transaction value for our customers and offer complementary accessories alongside our clothing collections in Chinese stores.”

**INTERNATIONAL APPEAL**

**Benvenuto Candiani Arantes from Andacco (Brazil)** highlights another defining characteristic of Expo Riva Schuh & Gardabags: “For us, the fair has always been a key sales event, particularly for penetrating the European market. But it also continually proves its international stature; for example, this year, we met a new buyer from Argentina, right here in Riva del Garda, despite the proximity of our countries.”

Further validating Expo Riva Schuh & Gardabags’ role as a global hub for footwear and bags are its impressive figures. **Roberto Pellegrini, Chairman of Riva del Garda Fierecongressi**, explains: “The fair continues to attract industry professionals from all over the world. **Exhibitors** hail from **36 countries**, while **visitors** represent around **100 nations** – 80% from Europe, 12% from Asia, with attendance from the Americas and Oceania remaining stable, and a notable increase in visitors from Africa.”

**THE SOLUTION TO NAVIGATING MARKET DYNAMICS**

The many events held during the fair were all met with an excellent turnout. The **Highlights Area** was bustling with activity, offering insights into consumer trends for men's and women's shoes, bags and sneakers.

Engagement was high in the **Market Focus** sessions, too, showcasing their full potential in connecting buyers and sellers beyond the exhibition stands. Equally popular were the presentations at the **Innovation Village Retail** and the grand finale of the **Startup Competition**, which concluded with a victory for **Cloov**, recognised for its ability to merge technological innovation with environmental sustainability in a project set to revolutionise the industry. Cloov is an app that offers an all-in-one solution for renting, buying and selling.

The **Expo Riva Night** was similarly a success, providing a festive opportunity for the Expo Riva Schuh & Gardabags community to strengthen connections – not only business-related but also personal. The evening’s special performance by artist Amii Stewart made for an even more exciting and classy event.

Expo Riva Schuh & Gardabags once again demonstrated how a trade fair can be more than just the ideal setting for placing orders; it is also a vital opportunity to gain knowledge and create an invaluable **network of relationships**. Above all, it is the best way to tackle the challenges of an increasingly complex market, as confirmed by **Jerick Sobie of Lucky**

**Feet (USA)**: “Our chain of stores specialises in comfort footwear. We came to Expo Riva Schuh to find reliable partners who can provide quality products at more competitive prices, as we are preparing to address the possibility of rising costs caused by potential import tariffs.”

**ANNOUNCEMENTS AND NEW DEVELOPMENTS: A NEW FORMAT FOR GARDABAGS AND EXPANSION OF THE EXHIBITION CENTRE**

The January 2025 edition of the Riva fair also served as the stage for several important announcements.

First and foremost, the introduction of **a new format for Gardabags**, which, starting in June 2025, will occupy Halls A2 and B2 of the fair. These halls will be divided into three areas, tailored to align with buyers’ searching habits, making it easier to connect supply and demand. A new concept that will feature stylish, fashion-inspired set-ups. Another major development is the **doubling of the exhibition offerings**, with collections from up to 100 companies and brands.

On the **investment and development front for the exhibition centre**, work is set to commence soon. The expansion of Hall B1 will be inaugurated as early as June 2025, and by 2028, a brand-new, two-storey structure will see the light.

This will provide even more space to showcase the most extensive and diverse selection of footwear, bag and accessory collections on the global stage.

Expo Riva Schuh & Gardabags is gearing up for a promising and high-speed path in the years to come. The next chance to witness this momentum will be from **14 to 17 June 2025**, with the 103rd edition of Expo Riva Schuh & Gardabags.

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[*Click here*](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1iLQmPhpbISbbLkbK-BFVolAwyQTonWon?usp=sharing) *to access the media kit for the 102nd edition of Expo Riva Schuh & Gardabags, featuring detailed insights on all the latest developments.*

[*Click here*](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1X0ofKideavNBMRADSo4yAFlcW8mL_wVe?usp=sharing) *for photos of the event*

