



Press Release

SXSW 2016: International industry professionals impressed by German startups, festivals and artists at the American creative industry event

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- 874 delegates from Germany again set a new record for participation, making it the second-largest European delegation, with 30 percent more delegates from Germany than last year
- Frank Fischer, BMWi: *“The strong commitment and broad presence from the German creative scene at this year’s SXSW strengthens Germany as a location for creative industries.”*
- Mike P. Heisel, Initiative Musik: *“Our joint appearance was a complete success.”*
- Prof. Dr.-Ing. Ina Schieferdecker, Fraunhofer Fokus: *“We’re taking home a lot of great ideas and will certainly participate in the next SXSW and German Haus.”*
- “Splash,” “ShareTheMeal” and “getthemayor.com/ #HoLDenOberbürgermeister” win Founders Awards in the official SXSW program
- SXSW Music: Krautrock special and newcomer bands thrill audiences during the music festival

Berlin, March 23, 2016

The success story of the German joint presentation continued at the thirtieth iteration of the creative industry conference South by Southwest (SXSW). With 874 industry participants from the music, interactive and film branches—a 30 percent increase over last year—and 23 bands, Germany once again formed the second largest European delegation. “Wunderbar – Germany at SXSW”—put together by Initiative Musik for the seventh year running—was devoted to digital media trends and virtual reality, tech to go and smart cities as part of SXSW Interactive, as were the presentations in German Haus and at the joint exhibition stand. The focus at SXSW Music was the Krautrock music genre, with a panel of experts as well as a music showcase with performances by faUSt, Kreydler and Stabil Elite, bringing together three generations of bands. The demand and interest was huge—German Haus attracted between two and three thousand guests every day.

Mike P. Heisel, music manager and member of Initiative Musik’s Advisory Board: *“SXSW—it means fantastic music, extremely interesting panels and pitches. Our joint appearance at the exhibition stand and in German Haus, several Founders Awards, and German participation in numerous panel discussions in the official program was a complete success.”* Ina Keßler,

Initiative Musik's Managing Director, added: *"More than fifty partners participated in the federal-state cooperation, which shows that our combination of exhibition stand and German Haus offers the ideal opportunity to introduce innovations and artists from Germany. That is why we'd like to thank all the partners for their fantastic collaborative assistance and financial contributions."*

Mirko Whitfield, responsible for international relationships to Europe, Asia and Africa at SXSW, summed it up as follows: *"There were more than 5,000 delegates from 38 European countries at SXSW 2016, and Germany had the third largest international delegation with approximately 874 registrants. This is an impressive increase when one considers that just ten years ago, there were only fifty German delegates at SXSW 2006. But equally impressive was the success of German companies at the various SXSW Interactive competitions and awards."*

The achievements of "Splash," "ShareTheMeal" and "getthemayor.com / #HolDenOberbürgermeister," each of which won a Founders Award in the SXSW program, underscore the growing importance of German culture and creative industries in an international context. *"The strong commitment and broad presence from the German creative scene at this year's SXSW strengthens Germany as a location for creative industries, and makes interested parties from around the world curious about cultural and creative innovations Made in Germany,"* was how Federal Minister for Economic Affairs and Energy (BMWi) Undersecretary Frank Fischer put it. Fischer heads the BMWi's Culture and Creative Industries Initiative, which supported the German appearance at SXSW for the seventh time.

Fraunhofer FOKUS Institute Director Prof. Dr.-Ing. Ina Schieferdecker, who is also President of the Association for Software Quality and Further Education (ASQF) had an exceptionally positive assessment of this year's SXSW: *"I was impressed by the range of events, the concentration of information and the multitude of open conversations with participants from the new economy, creative industries, science and public institutions. We're pleased that our Fraunhofer FOKUS talk about mega-events in smart cities and their multimedia presence in online media was met with great interest. We're taking home a lot of great ideas and will certainly participate in the next SXSW and German Haus."*

German Haus—culture and creative industries present digital trends and music from pop to Krautrock to techno

With a total of ten thousand visitors, German Haus was one of the "places to be," both for international delegates as well as for German participants, for whom German Haus once again was a central meeting place outside of the convention center. The traditional lunch at the invitation of the Houston Consulate General and Initiative Musik, and "Wunderbar—The Krautrock Edition"—an entertaining and informative talk about the pop-historic influence of

Krautrock—plus concerts by the bands faUSt, Kreidler and Stabil Elite marked the musical conclusion of the four-day program in German Haus. The more than thirty events in German Haus offered a broad spectrum of topics with illustrious German and international presenters, including Mike Butcher (TechCrunch/TechFugee), David Berkowitz (MRY) and Martyn Bryant (The Next Web). Discussion included the Interactive Conference’s leading topic of virtual reality, or current political events, as demonstrated by an international initiative out of Munich that offers creative digital solutions to help cope with the refugee crisis in Europe.

On top of all this, additional German participants had more to offer, for instance the German Folks House, which produced daily broadcasts about SXSW. Furthermore, the SXSW Music Festival program included presentations and their own evenings of concerts by Musicboard Berlin under the motto “Berlin Beats,” the Reeperbahn Festival, and the world music conference Womex organized by Pirahna Arts.

SXSW Accelerator und SXSW Innovations Award

German representatives and companies were more present in the conference program than ever before whether as speakers or in the official SXSW competitions. The international importance of German startups was especially apparent in the SXSW Accelerator and SXSW Innovation Award.

Three German companies qualified for the finals of the prestigious SXSW Accelerator. Moreover, two additional startups made it into the expanded selection. The success of Berlin-based startup Splash winning the illustrious Founders Award, endowed with 4,000 dollars, was the second triumph in a row for German startups. What’s even more important, however, is the attention and interest among investors that the win can generate. Two prizes went to Germany at the SXSW Interactive Innovation Awards. Berlin-based startup “ShareTheMeal,” realized for the United Nations, won in the New Economy category. And the city of Heidelberg’s portal “getthemayor.com / #HolDenOberbürgermeister” managed to prevail against 64 international competitors, winning the People’s Choice Award.

SXSW Music—23 Bands from Germany won over international bookers and music labels

The SXSW program was also full of highlights and important business talks for bands from Germany. A number of bands thrilled large international audiences in German Haus during SXSW Interactive, including Kytes, Eau Rouge, Aloa Input, Robot Koch and Still Parade. Almost all of the artists from Germany subsequently played several shows at SXSW Music. Initiative Musik supported thirteen bands and artists from Germany with the goal of helping them to gain market entry and/or expand their existing business networks.

Laura Carbone from Mannheim is just one example. Her single *Swans* began climbing the American college-radio charts right on schedule with SXSW. Carbone gave numerous interviews and received an actual offer right after her first show, something she hadn't expected: *"I'm really quite impressed by the festival's flair and the fact that so much can happen in such a short time period. After my first show, I received a record contract from Shock Records—Australia's biggest independent music label—which is just unbelievable."*

Robot Koch, who performed in Austin with Delhia de France, the singer of the Pentatonix as special guest, was also inspired by SXSW. The band played three gigs, including one night sponsored by the French fashion and music label Kitsuné and at the Berlin Beats event. Koch, a musician and music producer, was also a speaker on SXSW Music Tech panels and participated in Native Instruments, which deals with contemporary music production and the future of special digital music formats. After his music was used in Hollywood film trailers and American television shows, and after his performance at big festivals such as Coachella, his performances at SXSW was yet another step to expand his current contacts to music supervisors, labels, publishing houses and festival bookers.

Still Parade, an independent band based in Berlin, used SXSW to target expanding their international business contacts. Manager Anselm Peyer: *"The six shows in Austin were great for us to play in front of interested business partners from around the world. We were able to meet with our labels from the UK and Scandinavia, and expedite initiation of initial contacts to a US record company. The first stones have been laid, we're looking forward to being able to build on them and soon be back in the US."*

A comprehensive SXSW Music television special by the program [PopXport](#), which accompanied Kytes, Laura Carbone and Robot Koch in Austin, will be broadcast for the first time on March 25 at 11:30 pm (UTC) on Deutsche Welle. The 26-minute film will be available as video on demand and for downloading on the DW music pages: www.dw.com/musik

The joint presence at SXSW in Austin is a project of Initiative Musik and part of the foreign trade show program of Germany's Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy. Contributors to German Haus include the German Federal Government's Culture and Creative Industries Initiative and Platinum Partners, the German States of Baden-Württemberg, Bavaria, Berlin and North-Rhine Westphalia; Gold Partners, Hamburg and, for the first time, the city of Munich; and Silver Partners, the German Consulate General in Houston and the independent IT industry trade association ASQF (Association for Software Quality and Further Education).

Additional voices and/or complete original statements

SXSW

Mirko Whitfield, SXSW

There were more than 5,000 delegates from 38 European countries at SXSW 2016, and Germany had the third largest international delegation with approximately 874 registrants. This is an impressive increase when one considers that just ten years ago, there were only fifty German delegates at SXSW 2006.

But equally impressive was the success of German companies at the various SXSW Interactive competitions and awards. For example, the SXSW Accelerator pitch competition usually attracts the most submissions from around the world, and the eighth edition featured 48 finalists from 11 countries competing in six different categories. Splash from Berlin won the Virtual Reality Technologies category, which coincidentally also featured another finalist from Germany, namely Spherie from Hamburg. The success of the German delegation at SXSW 2016 once again highlights that the fact that German creative industries can compete internationally at all levels. Congratulations from everyone at SXSW on another very successful year!

Prof. Dr.-Ing. Ina Schieferdecker, Director Fraunhofer FOKUS and President of ASQF e. V., Berlin/Potsdam

This was my first SXSW. I was impressed by the range of events, the concentration of information and the multitude of open conversations with participants from the new economy, creative industries, science and public institutions. We're pleased that our Fraunhofer FOKUS talk about mega-events in smart cities and their multimedia presence in online media was met with great interest. We're taking home a lot of great ideas and will certainly participate in the next SXSW and German Haus. I wish German Haus continued support from the German federal states and cities and hope that we at ASQF and its subsidiary iSQI will be able to give German startups a lift to SXSW and further be able to provide an anchor for them on the topics of quality, reliability and security of software-based networked systems.

Dr. Klaus-Peter Potthast, Director of the Department for Digitalization & Media of the Bavarian Ministry of Economic Affairs and Media, Energy and Technology, Munich

Our presence at SXSW has become an important element of the internationalization strategy for the Ministry of Economic Affairs. As "Bavaria Munich"—a twin pack with the state capital—we've really achieved added value. With Aloa Input, Beißpony and Kytes, three bands made it into the official program. The startup Icarus had a winning pitch—they've had the first serious inquiries about contracts. Diversified panels helped double the number of visitors to German Haus. Our delegation is growing into a network—with relevance for working and employment in the Free State of Bavaria.

SXSW Music

Laura Carbone, Mannheim

SXSW has been an absolute highlight for me and a fantastic experience. I'm really quite impressed by the festival's flair and the fact that so much can happen in such a short time period. After my first show, I got a record contract with Shock Records—Australia's biggest independent music label—which is just unbelievable. My presence there was also good to do personal interviews (HBO Network / Vice) and meet people from the industry. Furthermore, my single Swans charted in the College Radio Charts Top 100 and we were invited to the V-Rox Festival in Russia this summer.

Kytes, Munich

The 2016 SXSW was an amazing experience for us as a band. It was a fantastic feeling to present our songs to American audiences. Beyond this, it allowed us to make contacts with various labels and media outside of Europe and we are quite happy to be continuing these conversations! All told, SXSW was an enormous win for us as a band!

Still Parade, Anselm Peyer, manager, Berlin

The six shows in Austin were great for us to perform in front of interested business partners from around the world. We were able to meet with our labels from the UK and Scandinavia, and expedite initiation of first contact with a US record company. The first stones have been laid, we're looking forward to being able to build on them and soon be back in the US.

Jan Quiel, booker, SST Seaside Touring / Wacken Open Air, Hamburg

This is our seventh year as participants at SXSW and mostly use this platform to network and to represent our events such as Wacken Open Air, for instance. Even though the focus at SXSW isn't on heavy metal, these days in Austin are very important for us because we like to see what's happening as far as the bigger picture is concerned. Austin at that moment is the perfect place to meet business partners from around the globe in an exciting atmosphere. We were also able to see several exciting band play live this year, including concerts outside of the official program. The long journey was definitely worth it again this year.

Thomas Venker, journalist and author Editor-in-Chief of kaput magazine, Cologne

faUSt, Kreidler and Stabile Elite together in Texas? If that doesn't go down as the best SXSW lineup in history!

SXSW Interactive and SXSW Film

**Michael Ronen, co-founder Splash, Berlin
Winner of the SXSW Accelerator**

Splash is an amazing tool for creating and sharing immersive experiences. The team is excited to be part of the social VR movement, proud to be part of the innovation launching out of the Berlin tech hub, and looking forward to making VR accessible to everyone. Splash can be to VR what Instagram is to photos!

**Nicole Huber, Director of the Office of the Mayor of Heidelberg
Winner of an SXSW Interactive Innovation Award—getthemayor.com /
#HoldenOberbürgermeister**

It's simply amazing that we won the People's Choice Award. The project's reception was phenomenal. We spoke with representatives from the municipal governments of Sacramento, Austin and Los Angeles. We want to keep in touch with these cities and search for solutions as to how the platform can easily be deployed in other places.

**Sebastian Stricker, ShareTheMeal, Berlin
Winner of an SXSW Interactive Innovation Award**

We are thrilled to be recognized as one of the world's most promising innovations. This award is a strong reminder that technology can change lives and that people around the globe truly believe we can achieve zero hunger by working together.

**Mike Butcher, TechCrunch/TechFugees, London
Panel in German Haus: What Can Be Done To Support Refugees**

TechFugees was delighted to participate with the German Haus on its discussion on tech solutions to the refugee crisis. It was clear that there was incredible passion amongst tech people to bring their creativity to the issue.

**Elena Alexaki, American Embassy in Athens, Greece
Panel in German Haus: What Can Be Done To Support Refugees**

Ron's presentation about the strong response of the citizens of Munich to the refugees arriving in the city was inspiring. Grassroots initiatives such as this are essential and complement the work of cities, states, international organizations and NGOs as they counter the current refugee crisis.

**Christian Beetz, Gebrüder Beetz Film Production, Cologne
SUPERNERDS, nominated for an SXSW Interactive Innovation Award**

Only things that happen in the US count in the US. We were only even recognized as producers in America due to our past success, such as the Oscar nomination three years ago and our Jury Award at the Sundance Film Festival in January. The nomination for an SXSW Interactive Innovation Award is now the ticket for admission to two leagues below the premiere league. Right away we made specific contacts for future collaborations—and who know, perhaps we'll even bring the entire multimedia format SUPERNERDS to an

American theater with a connected broadcaster. Everything seems possible in the land of unlimited opportunity.

Robin Hofmann, General Manager of HearDis!, speaker, Stuttgart

A memo to myself for next year's SXSW: polite restraint and German understatement can be left back at home. Here it's about showing what you have and what you can do. And the quality of the panel discussions showed that you don't have to keep it all hidden away. It quickly became clear that everyone else puts their pants on the same way as you do. As a speaker on the topic of "Music and Brand Partnerships," I relatively quickly had the audience's interest on my side. It resulted in numerous questions and a stack of business cards, including a specific project inquiry. If later, when networking, you mention that you're a speaker, too, that really generates greater interest. But also a quick name-dropping of "German Brands" in our customer portfolio produces a "wow." Right after that, get right to the point and say what you have to say and soon you've made contact with the platform developer at Sonos and Pandora's head of marketing.

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Initiative Musik is the federal government's funding agency that supports the music industry for rock, pop, and jazz in Germany. Initiative Musik's support programmes offer artists financial support to indirectly support their professional development. One of its main goals is to promote and support young musical talent, musicians with immigrant backgrounds, and disseminating music from Germany on a national level and on foreign markets. Another focus is the support of music venues that significantly contribute to maintaining cultural diversity within Germany with their work.

Initiative Musik is supported by the German Society for the Administration of Neighbouring Rights (GVL), the German Music Council (Deutscher Musikrat), and the German Music Authors' Society (GEMA). The bulk of the project's funding is provided by the German Federal Commissioner for Culture and Media.