

Slovak Matchmaking Fair 2020 - for the first time online

Thursday, 22. October 2020

Our agency immediately responded to the emergency situation associated with the COVID-19 pandemic and transferred our activities to the online space already in the spring. Based on the positive feedback from companies and in accordance with current regulations, the agency held our largest international business-to-business event - the Slovak Matchmaking Fair on October 21, 2020, for the first time online.

The online event brought together 102 representatives of companies and institutions from various industries from 23 countries around the world, who were given, despite current conditions that severely restrict travel, the opportunity to offer or gain access to new technologies, tools, solutions, products, or services to find their new business partners from Slovakia or abroad through pre-planned bilateral negotiations.

Richard Sulík, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Economy of the Slovak Republic emphasized in his opening speech of the event that "companies must be innovative throughout their existence and perhaps in such difficult times, when big changes are taking place, they need to be even more innovative or it will cost them a lot. " He also supported the idea of extending future events to the online environment: "I very much hope that next year it will be as usual, but I like the idea outlined by Mr. Šimončíč. Once the event is organized in this format let's not leave the online version and offer online in addition to the classic version, it is, a good idea how to further develop the Slovak Matchmaking Fair. "

In addition to outlining the possible future of the event, Róbert Šimončíč, CEO of SARIO, said that "the Slovak Cooperation Exchange is a relevant platform connecting academia, science, research, development, and companies. I am convinced that it contributes to the fulfillment of Slovakia's innovation potential and rightly belongs among the strategic activities of the SARIO agency and the Ministry of Economy of the Slovak Republic."

The agency not only brought to the participants an accompanying professional conference focused on innovations, hydrogen technologies, pandemic crisis management, and new opportunities for companies in space and aerospace industries but also made it available to the general public through its social media profiles and SARIO Newsletter.

Slovakia's innovation potential was at the forefront of the second (How to manage crisis situations) and third (Sky is not the limit: How Slovak companies find new business opportunities in the space economy) conference panels, which presented SARIO's innovation and diversification services through direct experience of companies and institutions. The aim of these SARIO services is to increase the competitiveness of Slovak companies by introducing innovative solutions (Industry 4.0) to the existing operations and to diversify production plans of companies towards high-tech sectors of the economy.

The Slovak Matchmaking Fair ONLINE was able to take place not only thanks to the support and cooperation with the Ministry of Economy of the Slovak Republic but also thanks to the long-term general partner of the event Československá obchodná banka (ČSOB).

In his speech, Koloman Buzgó, Director of ČSOB's Corporate Client Solutions Division, emphasized the role of the financial sector in resolving the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic: "Of course, the financial sector also has an irreplaceable role to play in this whole process. We are fully aware of our role not only in the field of financing, but the very important part for us is to have an advisory role as well, whether the company is expanding into new markets abroad, but also at home, in the field of acquisitions or succession."

During 14 years, the Slovak Matchmaking Fair has provided the opportunity for more than 2,700 Slovak and foreign participants to connect and cooperate. This year, the agency responded quickly and effectively to changing global conditions and was able to connect potential Slovak exporters with foreign countries in a new form and at the same time present the potential of the Slovak

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economy and especially Slovak technology companies to the world.

Feedback from the participants of the event:

„That was really impressive how well you have managed to connect people for meetings in an efficient manner, without major technical issues (unfortunately happening often on virtual events today). Great example to learn from!„

Anna Lomza, Business Finland

„I personally think this was a successful event and I am not writing this just as a courtesy, since after these months I select which VTC event to join and if it is not interesting enough, I just disconnect and carry on working. Here I have watched all three panels and also made some notes.“

Tomáš Šefranko, The Embassy of the SR in France, Paris

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