



FIREX
INTERNATIONAL



EXHIBITOR SPOTLIGHT

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- Glass and Glazing Federation

ABOUT GLASS AND GLAZING FEDERATION

The Glass and Glazing Federation is the largest trade federation representing the glazing sector within the UK. It offers technical support for building regulation compliance, specification assistance, and new developments in the industry, and produces a glazing manual containing advice on best practice in the specification and installation of glazing products.

In addition, it offers a comprehensive range of technical training courses, offering modules for all glazed applications, as well as guidance from its in-house health and safety experts.

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Adrian Blaydon, Technical Officer

ABOUT FIREX INTERNATIONAL

FIREX International is the UK’s largest hub for the fire safety sector. In 2019 it welcomed thousands of global professionals from 73 countries, boasting a **combined annual purchasing budget of £6.3 billion.**

Visitors come from construction, manufacturing, government and more, representing the whole spectrum of fire safety professionals, with the goal of sourcing innovative products, gathering the latest fire protection updates and learning best practice from industry bodies.



Glass and Glazing Federation at FIREX 2019

What were the primary business goals for your company at FIREX 2019?

Unlike most companies exhibiting at FIREX 2019, the objective of the GGF was not commercial in nature. We weren't selling anything. I think that was quite attractive to many visitors nervous of getting the 'hard sell'. The only thing we are promoting is fire-resistant glazing as a vital element of a building's fire strategy, and the best practice with regards to specifying and installing it.

The Fire-Resistant Glazing Group (FRGG) is one of the many technical groups within the Federation, and consists of the major fire-resistant glass manufacturers, fabricators, installers, testing and certification bodies, and independent consultants, all of which give their time free of charge to attend meetings and

offer on-stand support at FIREX. The only message we are intent on delivering is that fire-resistant glazing is extremely effective in the containment of fire, but it must be specified and installed correctly to ensure performance.

What kind of return on investment did you achieve from exhibiting at FIREX 2019?

The returns on investment are currently not quantifiable; this will take some time to assess. Over the course of our presence at both FIREX 2018 and FIREX 2019 we successfully engaged with just short of 200 stand visitors. In addition to this, our speaking slots during each show gave us the opportunity to explain the benefits of fire-resistant glazing as part of the strategy to contain fire and ensure the safe

evacuation of its occupants; this led to some very interesting post-presentation discussions and a boost to stand visitors.

Engagements included suppliers of fire safety products, but the predominant sector attracted to our stand was those seeking an update on legislative changes that have been introduced by government, as well as the changes which we anticipate in the months and years to come.

We anticipate that communication with those who we met at FIREX will continue to bear fruit, and we will be able to utilise our expertise to ensure the



safety in occupation of a building and its occupants. The shadow of the Grenfell Tower tragedy continues to be cast over the industry and the fire safety sector in particular. This has instilled a thirst for information, and it is our aim to engage with any interested party to be the voice of the UK glass and glazing sector.

Do you feel that FIREX 2019 helped you achieve your goals?

Certainly, although the full evidence of exactly how much will be difficult to quantify. We certainly look forward to further engagement with many of the companies that visited us on-stand, and the conversations following our presentation at the Expertise & Guidance Theatre are very likely to lead to further consultations. Raising our profile with companies involved in building fire safety can only enhance opportunities for us to share expertise and spread the word of best practice.

What did you find most valuable about FIREX 2019?

This is a difficult question to answer. It was very pleasing to see that our seminar: 'The Importance of Fire-Resistant Glazing' was so well attended, and stimulated both interest and good on-stand debate.

It is also extremely encouraging to see so many individuals and companies – both exhibitors and visitors – believing that the events post-Grenfell present a massive opportunity in the way buildings are built and regulated, leading to – in the words of Dame Judith Hackitt – a safer future.

Having said that, it would be remiss of me not to mention the FRGG members who gave their time free of charge to help us spread the message of best practice in fire-resistant glazing.

How did you promote your involvement pre-show?

The GGF has a variety of communication media with which we update our members and the industry in general about our activities. Our quarterly magazine *Glassi* – circulated to members, architects and a variety of interested parties – had an extensive article covering our presence at the exhibition.

In addition, we have a regular e-mail newsletter circulated to our members – ‘*Members First*’ – which contained a range of articles and soundbites inviting people along to meet us, as well as taking a look at the other stands within the exhibition.

As FIREX 2019 approached, we intensified our communications via the use of twitter and website articles to ensure that we demonstrated our commitment to fire safety, as well as our desire to ‘bang the drum’ for those companies who have a passion for the competent specification, fabrication and installation of fire-resistant with accurate evidence of performance.

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How do you find events when compared to other types of marketing?

More expensive! However we have to weigh the cost of an event such as FIREX

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2019 alongside the unique opportunity of engaging with interested parties in an environment that is very much in line with why we are there.

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Looking Forward

Are you planning on launching any new products in the next 12 months?

We will be consistently communicating developments within the glazing sector to our members, and this I suspect will involve continued engagement with government to advise about specific changes in legislation which may have an impact on the glazing industry, as well as disseminating those changes to our members.

It is also very likely that 2020 will see a further revision of our ADB referenced document: ‘*A Guide to Best Practice in the Specification and Use of Fire-Resistant Glazing Systems*’. We are waiting for the regulatory system to stabilise before this is issued – that could take a while!

Will you be returning to FIREX 2020?

We have not made the final decision on this as yet, but I think it is highly likely.

What do you see as the biggest industry trend in the coming 12 months?

Speaking from the perspective of the glazing industry, I don't think the

developments will be in products – it will be in legislation. We will see the results of the Hackitt Report, and the latest government consultation '*Building a Safer Future*' is the first step deciding how those results are implemented and enforced.

At the moment I do not believe there will be new products, but I do expect to see a strong tightening of regulations in the certification of product performance, and the competence of installers.

FIREX 2019

4% increase in visitor numbers

£6.3 billion combined visitor spending power

42% with a budget over £500,000

VISITOR BREAKDOWN



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