

“UPGRADED SUPPORT TOOL FOR INTEGRATION OF SMEs IN EUROPEAN AND GLOBAL VALUE CHAINS”

REPORT 7

SAIE TRADE FAIR IN BOLOGNA



**Co-funded by
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About SAIE 2024

SAIE has been held annually since 1965. Among the regular exhibitors are world leaders in the production of construction materials and equipment, as well as leading Italian companies. The exhibition is intended only for professional visitors; admission is free for foreign guests.

SAIE is an internationally renowned trade fair for the construction sector. The fair offers the possibility to see and compare the products of the industry's leading companies. Moreover it is an innovation platform for the construction industry. Visitors can here in depth and comprehensive information on the latest developments, trends, services and products in various fields.

The SAIE will take place on 4 days from Wednesday, 09. October to Saturday, 12. October 2024 in Bologna.

Fair	SAIE
City	Bologna
Country	Italy
Location	BolognaFiere, Piazza Costituzione 6, 40127, Bologna
Entrance	Ovest Costituzione Nord
Web page	www.saiebologna.it/en/

Key Aspects of SAIE:

1. **Event Focus:** SAIE covers various aspects of the construction sector, including building materials, construction technologies, infrastructure, digitalization in construction, and sustainable building practices.
2. **Exhibitors:** The event features a wide range of exhibitors, including manufacturers, service providers, and industry associations, who present the latest advancements in construction tools, machinery, and materials.
3. **Target Audience:** The fair is aimed at professionals in the construction industry, including architects, engineers, contractors, builders, and decision-makers involved in large-scale infrastructure projects.
4. **Conferences and Workshops:** Alongside the exhibition, SAIE also hosts numerous conferences, workshops, and seminars where industry experts discuss current trends, regulatory updates, and future challenges in the construction sector.
5. **Innovation and Sustainability:** A significant focus is placed on sustainable building practices and innovative technologies, reflecting the growing importance of environmental considerations in the construction industry.
6. **Networking Opportunities:** SAIE provides an excellent platform for networking, enabling attendees to establish business connections, discuss collaborations, and explore new market opportunities.

SAIE in Bologna is a major event for anyone involved in the construction industry, offering insights into the latest trends, products, and innovations that are shaping the future of building and infrastructure.

SAIE 2023 review

The latest data from the SAIE Bologna event, specifically the 2023 edition, indicates the event's significant scale and impact within the construction sector:

- **Exhibitors:** Over 500 companies participated, showcasing a broad range of innovations and technologies across the construction industry.
- **Visitors:** SAIE is known for attracting a large professional audience, though exact visitor numbers for 2023 aren't readily available. Historically, the event has been a major hub for professionals across various construction-related fields.
- **Workshops and Initiatives:** The event featured 108 workshops and 22 special initiatives, emphasizing key themes like innovation, seismic safety, sustainability, and digital transformation.

This data is reflective of the event's role as a critical platform for industry professionals to connect, learn, and explore the latest developments in construction.

Usefull links:

- Exhibitors search - <https://webapp.saiebologna.it/dashboard/espositori>
- How to reach SAIE - <https://www.saiebologna.it/en/come-arrivare/>
- Location - <https://maps.app.goo.gl/z6mJKm3DidMsxDjY8>
- Contact of SAIE - <https://www.saiebologna.it/en/contacts/>

Italian business culture

Italian business culture is rich in tradition and influenced by its historical, regional, and cultural diversity. Here are some key characteristics and tips to keep in mind when engaging with Italian businesses:

1. Importance of Relationships

- **Trust and Rapport:** Building trust is crucial in Italy. Italians prefer to do business with people they know well. Take time to establish a personal connection before discussing business.
- **Social Interactions:** Engage in social activities outside of work, such as lunches or dinners, to strengthen relationships. This is where trust is often built.

2. Communication Style

- **Indirect but Expressive:** Italians may not always say "no" directly, so listen carefully for nuances. At the same time, expect expressive communication, with gestures and enthusiasm playing a big role.
- **High Context:** Italians often assume shared understanding, so there may be less explicit detail in communication. Pay attention to context and non-verbal cues.

3. Decision-Making

- **Hierarchical Structure:** Italian companies tend to be hierarchical, with decisions typically made at the top. Ensure you're engaging with senior decision-makers.
- **Consultative Process:** While the decision is often top-down, input from various levels may be considered, which can slow down the process.

4. Time and Scheduling

- **Punctuality with Flexibility:** Italians appreciate punctuality, especially in business, but a degree of flexibility is common. Don't be surprised if meetings start a little late.
- **Respect for Leisure Time:** Italians value their personal time, particularly during weekends and the August holiday season. Avoid scheduling important meetings during these periods.

5. Work-Life Integration

- **Family First:** Family is central to Italian life, and this often influences work dynamics. Be respectful of family commitments and expect business to sometimes take a backseat to personal life.
- **Leisure and Productivity:** Italians work hard but also value breaks and time off, believing it contributes to overall productivity.

6. Professional Appearance

- **Dress Elegantly:** Appearance matters in Italy. Dressing well is a sign of professionalism and respect. Opt for classic, stylish attire that reflects your role and the occasion.

7. Business Etiquette

- **Formal Address:** Use titles like "Signore" (Mr.), "Signora" (Mrs.), or professional titles like "Dottore" for those with degrees. Formality is appreciated, especially in initial meetings.
- **Gift Etiquette:** Small, thoughtful gifts are appreciated, especially if they represent your home country or culture. However, extravagant gifts can be seen as inappropriate.

8. Negotiation Style

- **Patience and Persuasion:** Negotiations may be drawn out, with an emphasis on persuasion rather than confrontation. Be prepared for extensive discussions and multiple meetings.

By understanding and respecting these aspects of Italian corporate culture, you'll be better equipped to build strong, effective business relationships in Italy.

Manual for a Successful Visit to Fair

1. Pre-Fair Preparation

a. Define Objectives

- Clearly identify your goals for attending the trade fair. These might include finding new suppliers, building industry relationships, discovering innovative products, or exploring market trends.
- Prioritize companies, products, or services that align with your business needs.

b. Research the Event

- Thoroughly review the list of exhibitors and the event floor plan. Identify key booths that are relevant to your objectives and create a list of must-visit stands.
- Review the schedule of any workshops, presentations, or networking events, and plan to attend sessions that offer value to your business.

c. Schedule Meetings

- Proactively arrange meetings with important exhibitors or industry contacts prior to the event. This ensures dedicated time for in-depth conversations.
- Send professional emails or use official event platforms to introduce yourself and propose meeting times. Ensure that you outline your reason for the meeting and mutual benefits.

d. Prepare Marketing and Presentation Materials

- Bring sufficient business cards and relevant marketing materials, such as brochures or product sheets, to share during interactions.
- Prepare an elevator pitch highlighting who you are, what your company does, and your objectives for the event.
- Consider bringing a portfolio or digital presentation on a tablet or laptop to showcase your work, services, or products.

2. During the Fair

a. Dress Professionally

- Business attire is essential. Dress in a way that reflects professionalism and is appropriate for the industry you are representing.
- Be mindful of comfort, especially footwear, as fairs typically involve a significant amount of walking.

b. Time Management

- Begin the day with a clear, prioritized route, visiting high-priority booths early.
- Allocate time for unscheduled exploration. Many opportunities arise unexpectedly, so allow for flexibility in your schedule.
- Stick to your planned meetings but remain open to impromptu interactions.

c. Engage with Exhibitors

- Confidently introduce yourself with a handshake and a business card. Be clear about your objectives and maintain a professional tone throughout the conversation.
- Engage meaningfully by asking informed questions about products, services, and innovations. Listening carefully will help build rapport and trust.
- Keep notes of key points from your discussions to reference later. This will assist with effective follow-ups post-event.

d. Network Actively

- Participate in networking sessions, seminars, and presentations to meet professionals from various sectors.
- Don't hesitate to initiate conversations in shared spaces, such as lounges or cafes, where valuable informal networking can occur.

e. Gather Information

- Collect brochures, catalogs, and business cards from exhibitors of interest.
- For each interaction, document key contacts, potential opportunities, and any necessary follow-up actions.

3. Post-Fair Follow-Up

a. Organize and Review

- After the event, organize your notes, business cards, and collected materials. Prioritize contacts based on the level of opportunity and relevance.
- Evaluate the outcomes against the objectives you set prior to attending the fair.

b. Professional Follow-Up

- Send personalized thank-you emails to individuals you met, referencing specific points from your conversations to show genuine interest.
- If additional materials or information were promised, ensure they are sent promptly.
- Leverage digital platforms, such as LinkedIn, to maintain and strengthen connections with new contacts.

c. Evaluate the Experience

- Assess the overall success of your visit based on your pre-defined goals. Identify what worked well and areas for improvement for future events.
- Share the information and contacts gathered with your internal team to ensure they benefit from your insights and findings.

4. Additional Best Practices

a. Bring Essentials

- Ensure your phone is fully charged, and bring a portable charger if possible. Trade fairs can be long and draining on battery life.
- Carry a notebook or use an app to log key takeaways and potential follow-up actions during the fair.
- Pack light snacks and water to maintain energy throughout the day.

b. Leverage Social Media and Digital Tools

- Post updates and engage on social media platforms during the fair. This enhances your visibility and can attract attention from other attendees.
- Connect with individuals you meet on LinkedIn or through other professional networks to solidify new relationships.

c. Stay Organized

- Keep materials like brochures, notes, and business cards well-organized. This ensures that follow-up is easy and that you can quickly reference important information.

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