



**PRESS CONTACT**  
Westfalahallen Unternehmensgruppe  
**Nina Kupferschmidt**  
PR- & Content manager  
Marketing & Sales  
T +49 231 1204-556  
[presse@intertabac.de](mailto:presse@intertabac.de)

## PRESS RELEASE

No. 71/2026

# Strengthening the cigar segment: InterTabac and ECMA agree on strategic partnership

European Cigar Manufacturers Association contributes its expertise to the trade show

**The European Cigar Manufacturers Association (ECMA) and Messe Dortmund, organiser of the world's leading trade show InterTabac, will be joining forces in the future. The strategic partnership, which will take effect for the first time in 2026, will strengthen the trade show both in terms of content and concept. The shared goal is to further develop InterTabac and align it even more closely with the needs of the industry, while continuing to expand key formats such as the Cigar Culture Summit.**

Dortmund, 25 February 2026 – By joining forces, the European Cigar Manufacturers Association and Messe Dortmund are sending a clear signal regarding InterTabac's global role and the significance of the European cigar industry. On the one hand, the new strategic partnership underscores the segment's importance as one of the key focal areas of the trade show; on the other hand, it provides new momentum for the advancement of the event and its program.

Cigars have been among InterTabac's core segments since its first edition. ECMA brings together world leading cigar manufacturers from across Europe and represents their interests at European level. Against this backdrop, the collaboration is a natural fit for both sides. "The partnership with the ECMA strengthens InterTabac in terms of content and underlines our commitment to advancing relevant industry topics together with strong partners. Particularly with regard to formats such as the Cigar Culture Summit, this cooperation opens up additional perspectives for dialogue, depth, and international networking," emphasizes Sabine Loos, Managing Director of the Westfalahallen Unternehmensgruppe which owns and operates the Messe Dortmund venue. "Our collaboration therefore also makes an important contribution to the continuous development of the trade show."

Among other activities, ECMA advocates for a differentiated regulatory framework, the protection of traditional manufacturing methods, as well as quality and origin standards. In

## PRESS RELEASE

addition, ECMA serves as a knowledge platform for market and industry-related topics and promotes exchange within the European cigar industry – making InterTabac the ideal stage for the association’s activities. As ECMA members account for more than 85 percent of cigars and cigarillos placed on the EU market, the organisers are securing a strong industry voice for the trade show in the long term.

### **Benefits for the trade show and the industry**

For InterTabac, the collaboration represents a strategic expansion of its existing partner network: ECMA and its member companies contribute extensive industry expertise and close connections to key target groups. This expertise will now also feed into the evolution of InterTabac. At the same time, InterTabac serves as an established platform to highlight the activities of ECMA and its members. In Dortmund, the association has the opportunity to present itself to a large professional audience within a strong market environment and to generate targeted reach, visibility, and valuable contacts within the international industry.

**Paul Varakas**, ECMA Director General, explains why the cooperation with InterTabac is valuable for the association: “The InterTabac trade fair stands out as a key event each year, providing an excellent opportunity to explore the cultural and enjoyment aspects of cigars and cigarillos. This trade show serves as a prime platform for exchanging ideas, attracting cigar company owners and executives from across the globe. The trade fair has continued to develop positively over the years, and we are happy to see cigars put back as one of the core segments of the fair. In fact, InterTabac holds a special place in our hearts; where ECMA was awarded with the 2025 Cigar Journal’s Ambassador Trophy Award after 30 years of representation and defence of the cigar sector in Europe”.

**All the latest key information, updates and developments** are available 24/7 on the [trade show website](#), [LinkedIn](#) or directly by [Newsletter](#).

**EXHIBITION AT A GLANCE**

**INTERTABAC - THE WORLD'S LARGEST TRADE FAIR FOR TOBACCO PRODUCTS AND SMOKING ACCESSORIES**

InterTabac, the world's largest trade fair for tobacco products and smoking accessories, is where trade visitors meet top decision-makers from the retail, manufacturing and service sectors. The quality and international credentials of visitors is a hallmark of the world's leading event for the tobacco industry – with over 40% of visitors coming from abroad. International market leaders and industry representatives from the fields of cigars, cigarillos, cigarettes, pipes and smokers' requisites, cigarette and pipe tobacco, RYO and MYO, fine cut and leaf, shop fittings, press and IT, point-of-sale systems, vending machines, water pipes and accessories, electronic cigarettes and next generation products will be represented. The subject-matter leadership of InterTabac as a leading global trade fair has been enhanced further with presentations on current issues and challenges facing the industry as part of the newly developed, innovative InterTabac supporting programme.

**DATE:**

15 to 17 September 2026

**EVENT ORGANISER:**

Messe Dortmund GmbH

**PARTNERS:**

- North Rhine Westphalia Retailers' Association, State Tobacco Association (conceptual sponsor)
- German Federal Association of Tobacco Retailers (BTWE)
- German Association of the Tobacco Industry and Next-Generation Products (BVTE)
- German Cigar Industry Association (BdZ)
- German Smoking Tobacco Industry Association (VdR – Der Tabakmittelstand)
- German Shisha Tobacco Association
- Independent European Vape Alliance (IEVA)
- Alliance for Tobacco-Free Enjoyment (BfTG)
- German E-Cigarette Retailers' Association (VdeH)
- Cigar Association of America (CAA)
- ProCigar – Association of Dominican Cigar Manufacturers

- International Tobacco Growers' Association (ITGA)
- European Confederation of Tobacco Retailers (C.E.D.T.)
- European Cigar Manufacturers Association (ECMA)
- OctoberMultimedia
- And many more to be found [here](#)

**TARGET GROUPS:**

Top international decision-makers in the sales channel (tobacco retailers, wholesalers and retailers), as well as manufacturing and service sectors. Industry representatives from home and abroad in the fields of cigars, cigarillos, cigarettes, pipes and smokers' requisites, RYO, MYO, fine cut, pipe tobacco, shop fittings, press and IT, point-of-sale systems, vending machines, water pipes and accessories, and electronic cigarettes. InterTabac caters for everyone in the tobacco industry – in Germany and across the world. The fair is ideal for networking with regular customers, generating leads and acquiring new customers. Admission only for trade visitors aged 18 and over.



[Further information](#)

[Download images](#)

[About ECMA](#)