



Big Show

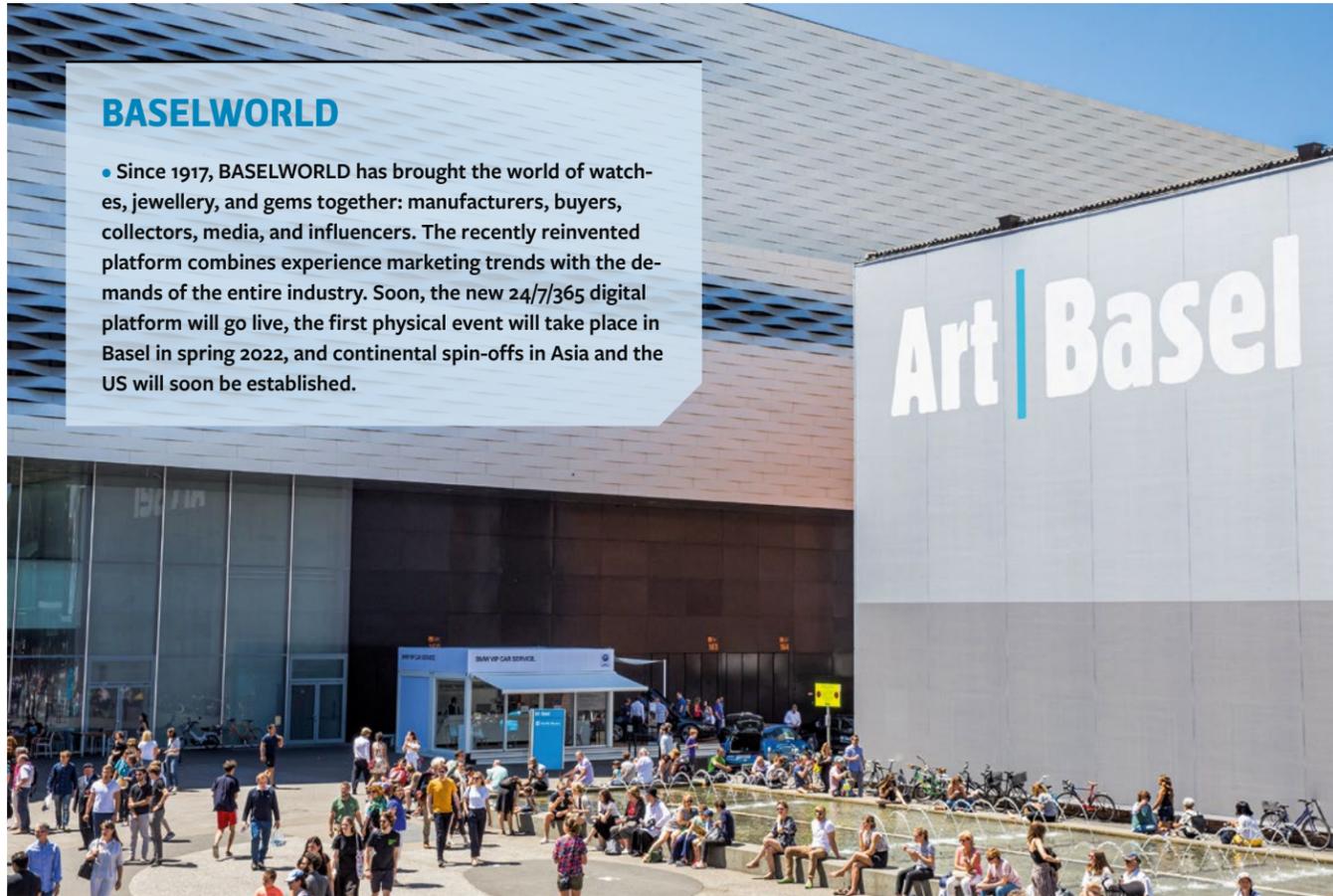
MCH Group has its roots in the Swiss Sample Fair, which took place in Basel in 1916. Since then, it has become one of the world's leading experience marketing companies.

BEAT ZWAHLEN / CEO @ MCH Group

Over the course of a century, MCH it has become one of the world's leading experience marketing companies. As CEO Beat Zwahlen explains, the company stages around 30 of its own marketing platforms, including Art Basel in Switzerland, Miami Beach, and Hong Kong. It also offers worldwide comprehensive services in experience marketing, from strategy through

to implementation. Furthermore, it hosts hundreds of events each year at its own venues in Basel and Zurich.

Beat joined the company in 2018 as its CFO before being promoted to the top position in January 2021. Mid-pandemic, the company needed a safe pair of hands to guide it through the crisis. "The experience marketing sector is undergoing profound changes," he explains. "As a result, we are in the midst of →



BASELWORLD

• Since 1917, BASELWORLD has brought the world of watches, jewellery, and gems together: manufacturers, buyers, collectors, media, and influencers. The recently reinvented platform combines experience marketing trends with the demands of the entire industry. Soon, the new 24/7/365 digital platform will go live, the first physical event will take place in Basel in spring 2022, and continental spin-offs in Asia and the US will soon be established.

a far-reaching transformation process to align ourselves with future market and customer requirements in the experience marketing sector. We want to turn traditional exhibitions and events into hybrid or digital platforms and to create unique added value for communities throughout the year. To develop existing and new formats, we are investing in innovation, business development, and internationalisation.”

MCH currently has a total of 710 permanent employees: 355 in Switzerland, 30 in other European countries, 278 in the US, and 47 in the Middle East and Asia. The group achieved a consolidated revenue of over \$200 million in 2020, despite business operations grinding to a standstill in many areas. Over the last few years, the group has consistently been among the ten most lucrative exhibition companies in the world, which has helped it to mitigate the COVID chaos. “The first half of 2021 was marked by lockdown and embarking on a new future,” Beat says. “As in the ten months previ-

ously, MCH’s business activity was largely stagnant due to measures for fighting the pandemic but we are looking optimistically to the second half of this year, when it will be possible to stage large-scale events again and gradually ramp things up. Over the course of the pandemic, the group has laid robust foundations for a successful turnaround and prosperous future.”

Regardless of lockdowns, key projects were implemented and taken forward in the first part of this year. Art Basel in Hong Kong – the only event that MCH was able to hold during this period – was scaled down physically but expanded digitally.

Beat says: “In the watch, jewellery, and gemstones sector, a new concept for BASELWORLD was developed and launched, while the acquisition of Digital Festival AG means new events and skills have been added to our portfolio. In the experience marketing division, several hybrid and digital projects have been realised worldwide.”

Beat has helped MCH draw up a strate- ➔

Like an old married couple, MCH and Securitas AG can look back on an eventful and successful partnership. International exhibitions today require a team of several hundred security professionals, not to mention mutual trust, which our partnership has in spades. Our future is bright.

TIMO SOLLBERGER
regional director,
Securitas AG



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Urs Alig, CEO of Securitas AG

Our company protects companies and individuals 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, at any event. As CEO of Securitas AG, I am very proud to be part of Switzerland’s oldest, largest, and most trusted security company.”





LUPA SYSTEMS

• Lupa Systems is a private investment company founded in 2019 by James Murdoch, son of Rupert Murdoch, as an investment vehicle to assemble a new portfolio of media companies. It was funded, in part, by the \$2 billion in proceeds James Murdoch received from the \$71 billion sale of most of the Murdoch family's 21st Century Fox empire to Disney.

As a proud partner of MCH Group for more than 15 years, Sempex handles complex organisational and logistical issues at the company's exhibition venues in Basel, Zurich, and Lausanne. Together, we have developed one of the most modern and complex IT logistics tools for events, which efficiently and ecologically controls delivery and handling at exhibition grounds.

CHRISTOPH FRITSCH
CEO of Sempex

gic framework and clear roadmap for returning to normality in 2022, when large-scale events are planned internationally. "In 2019, we defined the future strategic direction we wanted to take, and developed our classic event business into future-orientated community platforms with physical, hybrid, and digital formats, offering holistic experience marketing solutions worldwide and increasing occupancy of our own infrastructures in Switzerland," Beat explains. "The capital increase, the entry of the new anchor shareholder Lupa Systems, and the renewal of the Board of Directors have meant that the capital structure, shareholder base, and management have all been strengthened and the strategic direction confirmed."

From 24 to 26 September 2021, Art Basel in Basel represented the beginning of the art world coming together again and the rejuvenation of the international art market. It was the first full-scale international art fair since 2019, marked by outstanding presentations and vigorous sales, attracting around 60,000 visitors. The complementary digital programme "Art Basel Live" amplified participating galleries to a broad global audience. [🔗](#)



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