

What's New From Ningbo at the 140th Canton Fair?

By Zhao Yu

The 140th China Import and Export Fair, better known as the Canton Fair, runs in three phases in Guangzhou from October 15 to November 4, filling 1.55 million square meters of exhibition space with 75,700 booths.

This year marks the fair's 70th anniversary.

The Ningbo delegation has booked more than 4,600 booths, among the largest of any delegation in the country. Nearly 1,900 companies from Ningbo will exhibit across all three phases of the fair, with a combined total of more than 20,000 business representative attendances expected across the three phases.

New Products Target New Markets

Wang Yunzhou of Deli Group's overseas products department stood at his booth, four or five product lines arrayed behind him.

The most advanced item on display, Wang said, is a safe that opens by palm-vein recognition. Traditional safes rely on passcodes, fingerprints or facial scans, but many buyers in the Middle East are uneasy about putting a palm on a pad or having their face read, so the team built a model that opens when a hand hovers over the sensor.

"Nothing to touch, no face involved—hold your hand there and the door opens on its own," Wang said. The same products are aimed at Southeast Asia, where e-commerce is growing fast and buyers have moved on from heavy fire-proof boxes to lighter models for the home, chosen "not just for security but to match the decor."

There is a practical reason too: parcels in Southeast Asia mostly move by motorcycle, and lighter



The 140th China Import and Export Fair. [Photo by Zhao Yu]

goods are far easier to handle. "We mainly make office products, and our customers are mostly government and corporate buyers—the same people who need safes, so the two customer bases overlap heavily," he said. "Distributors and second-tier customers can add safes to their existing line with little extra effort."

New Faces Make a Strong Debut

Fang Chun, a sales manager at Mobewire Mobiles Company, stood at her booth as executives from other companies passed by and nodded in greeting.

"We go to MWC in Spain and CES in the U.S. every year, but only to meet clients—never to exhibit," she said. "I've been with the company ten years, and this is our first time taking a booth at a trade show. We want to meet new buyers and solution partners face to

face, get a firsthand read on where global demand and technology are heading, and show what a Ningbo-based ODM can do."

Based in Fenghua, Ningbo, the company has spent more than 20 years in phone ODM. It now ranks among the world's top five smartphone ODMs by shipments, with revenue of \$1.86 billion in 2025.

It employs more than 4,000 people, over 1,500 of them engineers, and handles the entire process in-house—from the first design drawing to software and hardware, structural engineering, production and shipping. That self-sufficiency, Fang said, is what has kept Mobewire working with Transsion for more than 18 years. This year the company also won projects from Honor and Lenovo, and it maintains long-running ties with TCL and ZTE.

Mobewire's fastest-growing lines over the past two years have been smart payment terminals and other industry

hardware. "Mobile payment is already mature in China, but overseas markets still run on credit cards, and they need Chinese manufacturers to supply reliable, high-quality hardware," Fang said.

The company is also eyeing AI hardware such as recording cards, AI boxes and AI glasses. "We are working through the options with customers and hoping to find new growth."

"Green" Is Always the Buzzword

Not long after the doors opened, the booth of Ningbo Deye Technology Co., Ltd. was packed with buyers from a dozen countries.

"The product we're pushing this time is a low-voltage stacked all-in-one energy storage system," said Gu Yukai, assistant to the general manager, pointing to a white unit about two meters tall.

Compared with the previous model, it carries more

battery capacity at a lower cost and covers a household's everyday backup power needs. "We had a lot of European and Australian buyers in this morning, and they were very interested."

The display also features fast-charging stations for electric vehicles and smart sockets using LoRa, a long-range, low-power wireless standard.

"The green energy market has enormous potential, but competition is getting fiercer by the day. We have to keep coming up with new products," Gu said. The company also tailors its offerings to the needs of each market.

"In the Middle East, the grid is unstable, so buyers lean toward off-grid systems. In Europe and the U.S., electricity is expensive, so hybrid inverters that work around peak and off-peak rates go down better. And the battery itself involves trade-offs," Gu said.

The fair will close, but Ningbo's export trade is already pushing deeper into its next chapter.

Ten Years On, China's Only Confucius Institute on Home Soil Builds Bridges to the World

By Lu Xinyan

Mary, an American retiree, has spent more than four years teaching English to local residents in Ningbo as a volunteer.

Her journey began at the Confucius Institute at the University of Nottingham Ningbo China (UNNC-CI), where she studied Chinese for free. The kindness she received there inspired her to give something back. She began teaching English to people in her community, also free of charge, and has continued to do so ever since.

On October 16, the Confucius Institute at UNNC marked its 10th anniversary. Professor Yao Shujie, its founding director and a former head of the Confucius Institute at the University of Nottingham in the UK, recalled: "From the very day it was established, we believed that the institute at Ningbo would play an increasingly important role in spreading Chinese culture and fostering cross-cultural exchange."

As the only Confucius Institute based in China, UNNC-CI was formally inaugurated on April 11, 2016. It welcomes international residents who want to learn Chinese, explore the country's culture and gain a deeper understanding of life in China. Its work also brings people from different backgrounds together, fostering greater cultural understanding through language learning and exchange.

Its overseas counterparts promote Chinese among local communities; UNNC-CI's classrooms instead bring together international faculty and students from a wide range of countries and cultural backgrounds.

The institute offers free Chinese courses, helping learners navigate the country's traditions and everyday customs as they settle into life in China.

Beyond pinyin and character drills, Chinese instructor Yuan Youna fills her lesson plans with practical "life hacks" for getting by in China.

"For beginners who have just arrived in China, everyday phrases matter, but so does understanding how contemporary Chinese society actually works," Yuan said. That material—the part that goes beyond conventional language teaching—is what students respond to most, and many come back to share how it played out in real life.

Cultural activities offer another way to experience life in China. During traditional festivals, international students and teachers take part in local celebrations, from writing Spring Festival couplets and solving lantern riddles to making zongzi for the Dragon Boat Festival and mooncakes for Mid-Autumn Festival. These experiences give them a chance to learn about Chinese traditions by taking part in them.

Since it opened, UNNC-CI has taught more than 2,000 students from about 60 countries and regions—among them Germany, the US, South Africa, the UK and Chile—and has run over 400 sittings of the HSK, China's standard Chinese proficiency test. Many expatriates in Ningbo and the surrounding area have studied there, passed the exam and gone on to win government scholarships or work permits in China.

Chief Adviser: Zhao Qingchuan
Proofreader: Jin Yuhang

Ningbo Pairs Autumn Sports Calendar With Travel Perks

By Jin Lu

Ningbo is combining a packed autumn sports calendar with travel deals and city tours to encourage visitors to stay longer and explore more of the city.

From October through December, the program will feature international competitions, professional sporting events and community activities, with tennis and weightlifting among the main draws.

The WTA 500 Ningbo Open is scheduled for Oct. 17–25 at the Ningbo (Yin-

zhou) Tennis Center, followed by the World Weightlifting Championships at the Ningbo Olympic Sports Center from Oct. 27 to Nov. 8. The weightlifting championships are returning to China for the first time in 31 years and will be the first qualifying event for the sport at the Los Angeles 2028 Olympics.

Sailing, half-marathons and trail-running events will also offer opportunities to explore Ningbo's coastline and mountain landscapes.

The city is preparing themed itineraries for sports

fans and tourists, along with pop-up activities, visitor information and interactive giveaways near competition venues and in shopping districts.

The program will also connect with a citywide WeChat mini-program that offers special deals to visitors. A dedicated page is planned where eligible visitors can upload competition registration records, match tickets or official electronic ticket stubs to verify their eligibility for the offers.

Planned benefits include hotel, shopping and



Elena Rybakina visits Zoumatang village in Ningbo.

[Photo provided to Ningbo Times]

dining discounts, as well as ride vouchers for Didi, China's ride-hailing platform. The of-

fers are designed to encourage visitors to extend their trips beyond the competitions.

