

Future bright for 'lighting capital'

By ZHAN LISHENG
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The 11th China (Guzhen) International Lighting & LED Applications Fair, which will run from Oct 18 to 21, will help the Pearl River Delta boomtown of Guzhen to achieve its goal of growing into a global lighting hub in the foreseeable future.

A total of 594 firms, including some from abroad, had confirmed their attendance by early October, and about 2,300 exhibition booths have been booked, according to the fair's organizing committee.

Total exhibition area will reach 40,000 square meters.

The city government of Zhongshan, where Guzhen lies, is cosponsoring the event along with the China Lighting Association and the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade's light industry council.

The township government of Guzhen, which is widely known as "China's lighting capital", will join forces with the Zhongshan Economy and IT Bureau as well as the Lighting Capital Exhibition (Zhongshan) Co Ltd to manage the event.

The fair will continue to highlight LED applications, according to organizers.

More than 200 LED companies have booked more than 800 booths to show off their latest solutions, and LED enterprises account for 40 percent of all the confirmed exhibitors.

The organizing committee will also hold an exhibition of the short-listed works of the China International Lighting Design Awards and select highlights from the fair's exhibits in addition to hosting a series of related seminars and forums.

This year marks the 10th anniversary of the township's official designa-

tion as "China's lighting capital", and the local government will hold a series of ceremonial activities to supplement the fair, said Ou Jinhui, director of Guzhen township government's publicity office.

Ou said that the activities will include ceremonies to celebrate the launch of a national demonstration base for a new model of industrialization, the launch of the Guangdong Lighting Fixture International Procurement Center and to award "loyal exhibitors".

Guzhen earned the honor of "China's lighting capital" named by the China National Light Industry Council and the China Lighting Industry Association in 2002 thanks to its well-developed lighting industrial chain, its substantial industrial output, its lion's share of the lighting market worldwide and its status in China and abroad.

The township's lighting sector churned out an industrial output of about 18 billion yuan (\$2.86 billion) in 2011. Its products account for more than 60 percent of the domestic market and have found market in more than 130 countries and regions, official statistics indicate.

According to local officials, holding the annual event is a crucial part of the township's blueprint to grow into a global lighting hub with strong competitiveness in marketing, technology and innovation.

"We expect the hub to take shape by the end of the 12th Five-Year Plan (2011-2015)," Ou said.

The township aims to realize an annual business turnover of more than 40 billion yuan by 2015 and to have a couple of nationally or even globally renowned companies, each of which is capable of realizing an annual sales volume of more than 5 billion yuan.

The township also expects to have 30 firms capable of raking in busi-



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The lighting industry fair attracts visitors from around the world.



The town Guzhen was officially named "China's lighting capital" by the China National Light Industry Council and the China Lighting Industry Association in 2002.

ness turnover of more than 100 million yuan each by then.

Guzhen now has more than 3,600 enterprises manufacturing lighting fixtures, more than 2,500 companies involved in related wholesale

and retail business as well as more than 3,700 companies involved in different segments of the lighting-related industrial chain, including component supply, plastics supply, packaging, printing and logistics.

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HR key to Guzhen's development drive

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Finding new ways to effectively acquire human resources for the township of Guzhen's thriving lighting industry is among its most important tasks as the town strives toward its goal of becoming a global lighting hub.

"We bear clearly in mind the important role of human resources in industrial development, and we are building up human resources in support of the industrial upgrade," said Ou Jinhui, director of Guzhen township government's publicity office.

To that end, the township government has set up a national incubation base, where young entrepreneurs can open businesses with help in the form of financial aid, preferential policies as well as other incentives, including subsidies for office rental and reduced fees for property management, water, power, telecom and the Internet.

In the past couple of years, more than 80 young people have chosen the base to start businesses specialized in e-commerce, foreign trade, accounting and tax service, industrial design, planning and R&D, said the official.

"The township government has recently set up an administrative committee for the base, which is expected to improve the service and administration of the base," he said.

Meanwhile, Guzhen is anticipating at least 3,000 industry professionals from China and abroad via training programs or by offering incentives aimed at securing professionals in certain in-demand positions.

To improve the assembly and packaging skills, he said, the human resources and social pension bureau of the local government has integrated training and competition programs for the workers.

Training programs on intellectual property rights, product quality, safe production, technological devel-



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OU JINHUI
DIRECTOR OF GUZHEN TOWNSHIP
GOVERNMENT'S PUBLICITY OFFICE

opment and corporate management are also readily available to workers and management staff.

And Guzhen has generously set up a township community college by joining hands with Sun Yat-sen University in Guangzhou, one of China's key universities.

"Guzhen is planning to set up a lighting polytechnic school and to launch a special fund for the development of human resources," he said.

"Our endeavors aim to cultivate the existing workforce into professionals, while securing high-caliber ones, making them settle down and enabling them to make good use of their genius," he said. "Guzhen's future lighting industry hinges very heavily on them."

Other steps the township government is taking to make the lighting industry bigger and stronger include a strategy to highlight the quality of products and hone brand awareness.

The government has also promoted a renewed focus on technological innovations. Furthermore, it has taken great strides to improve the infrastructure of the industrial parks and develop a modern service industry.