

# Guangdong enterprises showcase cutting-edge goods at Canton Fair

Service robot section latest addition to one of the world's largest trade events



By YUAN SHENGGAO

At the 137th China Import and Export Fair in Guangzhou, Guangdong province, legions of businesses from the host province are showcasing their self-developed high-tech products, demonstrating the innovation strength and industry chain resilience of Guangdong manufacturers.

The event, commonly known as the Canton Fair, spans three phases, running from Tuesday to May 5. The first phase lasts five days, with more than 11,300 companies occupying 25,064 booths in a total exhibition area of 520,000 square meters.

The exhibitions span five categories: Electronics and Appliance; Manufacturing; Vehicles and Two Wheels; Light and Electrical; and Hardware. It features advanced industries and technological support, with a slew of new companies, products, technologies and business models emerging.

A new highlight of the fair is the service robot section. Forty-six companies are showcasing various products, including embodied robots, commercial service robots, and educational and entertainment robots.

Of these exhibitors, 16 are from Guangdong, presenting a variety of robots such as humanoid, surgical, cleaning, logistics, food delivery, guidance, industrial inspection, and bionic companion pet robots. The innovations underline the prospects of Guangdong's robotics driving various industries.

### Award winner

Among the Guangdong robot companies is Guangdong Lingdu Intelligent Technology Development, which has set up a more than 2-meter-high glass wall on-site and photovoltaic panels, creating an open space to demonstrate real scenarios. That allows visitors to learn up close about how its intelligent robots clean the wall and photovoltaic panels.

Lingkong K3, developed by Lingdu Intelligent, is the world's first mass-produced exterior wall cleaning robot. It can operate on building facades up to 600 meters high, cleaning a daily average of 1,500-2,000 sq m per unit, which is three times more than manual cleaning.

When Lingdu Intelligent debuted at the Canton Fair in 2024, the Lingkong K3 high-altitude curtain wall cleaning robot stood out from more than 2,300 products nationwide, winning the highest-level category of the Canton Fair Design Award. The "Best of the Best" prize attracted wide attention and laid a foundation for the company's global expansion.

Zhang Zhizhong, chairman of the company, said that he has seen many overseas buyers at this year's event, especially from Southeast Asian and Middle Eastern markets. On the opening day of the Canton Fair alone, Lingdu Intelligent



Foreign merchants show interest in the new products and tech solutions of Guangzhou Shiyuan Electronic Technology on the opening day of the Canton Fair on Tuesday in Guangzhou, Guangdong province. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

reached several potential cooperation agreements.

"In the coming days, they will be visiting our headquarters in Huangpu district (of Guangzhou) for a factory inspection," Zhang said.

Guangzhou Shiyuan Electronic Technology, a leading enterprise in the ultrahigh-definition display industry in Guangdong province, focuses on interactive displays and artificial intelligence. At the fair, the company revealed six major scenario solutions and a series of new products, attracting attention from industry experts, business partners and visitors from around the world.

### Market prospects

Zhou Lili, chairwoman of the company's global business group, said the flow of overseas buyers at the ongoing Canton Fair has been continuous. "In the first two days of the exhibition, we communicated with more than 200 buyers from over 50 countries. We remain optimistic about the market prospects," she said.

Asia alone represents a vast overseas market, with the most populous country, India, and the fourth-most populous country, Indonesia, she noted.

Taking smart classroom solutions as an example, Zhou said that while they are a mature category in China with a very high market share, many schools in several Asian countries have yet to start deploying such solutions. Consequently, these markets hold significant potential.

According to the company, it established subsidiaries in Indonesia and Thailand in July and August, respectively, and has built sizable teams there. This year, the company plans to open a subsidiary in the United Arab Emirates.

"With the support of the Belt and Road Initiative, coupled with our company's own investments, we are confident that we can

## 9.11 trillion yuan

Amount of Guangdong's foreign trade in 2024, enabling the province to stay No 1 nationwide for 39 consecutive years

## 1,500+

Number of core AI enterprises in Guangdong, with the highest number of national "little giant" specialized and innovative enterprises in the field

quickly become a leader in these markets," Zhou said.

Amid a volatile global trade environment, this year's Canton Fair serves as a platform for China to demonstrate its commitment to opening-up and for Guangdong to showcase its industrial resilience and innovative pathways.

In addition to a number of Guangdong companies featuring eye-catching arenas such as robotics, many others from the province are concentrating on emerging fields such as new energy and energy storage, showcasing a range of high-tech, high-value products that represent new quality productive forces.

### Trade powerhouse

Guangdong is China's top province in terms of foreign trade. Customs data show Guangdong's foreign trade reached 9.11 trillion yuan (\$1.25 trillion) in 2024, an increase of 9.8 percent over 2023. It enabled the province to rank first in the country for 39 consecutive years and contributed 38.7 percent to national growth, accounting for 20.8 percent of the total, an increase of 0.9 percentage points.

Specifically, the province's exports amounted to 5.89 trillion yuan in 2024, up 8.4 percent, while

imports totaled 3.22 trillion yuan, up 12.5 percent.

During the first quarter of this year, Guangdong's imports and exports reached 2.14 trillion yuan, an increase of 4.2 percent from the same period last year, which is 2.9 percentage points higher than the national growth rate. Of the foreign trade value, exports were 1.34 trillion yuan, up 1.4 percent, and imports were 798.15 billion yuan, increasing 9.3 percent, according to the latest customs statistics.

As China's leading province in terms of economy, opening-up and foreign trade, Guangdong has seen its import and export value jump to 8 trillion yuan and 9 trillion yuan in just four years since 2021, said Zhu Xiaojun, deputy head of the Guangdong Provincial Department of Commerce, during an investment promotion event at the Canton Fair Complex on Tuesday.

"This demonstrates the solid foundation, resilience and enormous potential of the province's economic development," the official said.

Guangdong boasts a strong manufacturing base, comprehensive industrial support and a large market capacity with robust demand. Its connectivity with Hong Kong and Macao and its alignment with international standards provide new trade channels and vast market opportunities for export-oriented businesses.

This is significant for expanding into diversified markets such as Southeast Asia, Europe and Portuguese-speaking countries, while accelerating the integration of domestic and foreign trade under the new circumstances.

### Front-runner

Guangdong encompasses all 31 major manufacturing categories, integrating development across traditional, emerging and future industries. This has led to the formation of nine industrial clusters each capable of generating over 1

trillion yuan in annual operating revenue. These include next-generation electronic information, the light industry and textiles, advanced materials, green petrochemicals, modern agriculture and food, smart home appliances, software and information services, automobiles and new energy.

In 2024, industrial enterprises above designated size in the province achieved 19.4 trillion yuan in combined operating revenue. Fifteen industries, including electronic information manufacturing, automobiles and electrical machinery, ranked first nationally by annual output. Guangdong has also led the nation for years in the production of automobiles, smartphones, industrial robots and drones.

The core industry scale of AI in Guangdong surpassed 220 billion yuan in 2024, maintaining its lead nationally. The province is home to more than 1,500 core AI enterprises, with the highest number of national "little giant" specialized and innovative enterprises in the field.

The production of industrial robots increased from 44,700 units in 2019 to 246,800 units in 2024, accounting for 44 percent of the country's total. Since 2020, Guangdong has remained the top producer of industrial robots for five consecutive years, establishing a preliminary comprehensive "brain-sensors-limbs" humanoid robot industry chain.

Han Yonghui, deputy head of the Guangdong Institute for International Strategies at the Guangdong University of Foreign Studies, said the development resilience and vitality of foreign trade are strongly linked to the province's enhanced position as a trade hub and the flourishing growth of its trade entities.

In 2024, Guangdong was home to 146,000 companies involved in foreign trade, an increase of 11.6 percent from 2023. Of them, 123,000 were private businesses who achieved an import and export volume of 5.8 trillion yuan, a 15.2 percent increase — 5.4 percentage points higher than Guangdong's overall growth rate. Their contribution to Guangdong's total import and export value rose by 3 percentage points to 63.6 percent.

The increased vitality of these business entities has become a driving force behind Guangdong's flourishing foreign trade, experts said.

Han said Guangdong's achievements in foreign trade can also be attributed to the Belt and Road Initiative and the promotion of high-level opening-up policies. These factors have led to a rapid increase in trade volume with BRI countries, diversification and technological sophistication of the province's exports, and a continuous expansion in the export of mechanical and electrical products and high-tech products.

Additionally, the rapid rise of emerging industries and customs clearance facilitation measures are conducive to reduced logistic costs and export efficiency, enhancing the competitiveness and market responsiveness of enterprises, he added.

### GDToday Briefly

#### Airport introduces new range of travel services

Guangzhou Baiyun International Airport has introduced a range of services aimed at providing seamless and greater travel convenience for both exhibitors and visitors to the Canton Fair. During the event, the services, available at the service counters of the Canton Fair Complex, include check-in assistance, luggage handling, and flight and ticket inquiries. In addition, the counters offer bookings for hotels, rental cars, tours, and tickets to local attractions. Moreover, the airport operates a shuttle bus service between the airport and the Canton Fair Complex during the event.

#### Airline boosts flights to support event

China Southern Airlines has announced a significant increase in flight operations and passenger services to meet surging travel demand during the 137th Canton Fair. The airline plans to operate more than 15,600 flights in and out of Guangzhou during the trade show, marking an 18 percent increase from the previous session. The airline plans to operate 12,400 domestic flights, with added capacity on key routes to destinations such as Beijing, Shanghai, Hangzhou, Yiwu and Taizhou. More than 1,300 flights will utilize China-made aircraft including the C919 and ARJ21. On the international front, the airline will run nearly 3,300 flights to major hubs including Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur, Dubai, Paris and Amsterdam, supporting trade partners from Southeast Asia, the Middle East, Europe and Oceania.

#### Cuisine carnival kicks off cultural feast

The vibrant "Food in Guangzhou" Canton Cuisine Carnival started at the Canton Fair Complex on Tuesday, coinciding with the opening of the 137th Canton Fair. The 15-day culinary extravaganza, held for the first time at the Canton Fair, is expected to attract attendees from across the globe, offering an immersive international experience that blends culinary delights with cultural performances. The carnival features nearly 40 renowned dining establishments, including Guangzhou's time-honored brands, Cantonese cuisine specialists, intangible cultural heritage food vendors, Michelin-starred restaurants and trendy beverage brands. In addition to gastronomic offerings, the festival includes cultural performances and interactive ICH experiences.

#### Trade-in campaign for overseas nationals

Guangzhou has introduced a comprehensive trade-in campaign designed for foreign nationals, as well as residents from China's Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan. The initiative aims to enhance the consumption experience for overseas guests and highlight the city's appeal as an international consumer hub. The yearlong campaign offers subsidies across six major categories: automotive trade-ins, home appliances, 3C digital products, electric bicycles, home renovation, and home modifications. Eligible applicants can receive subsidies of up to 20,000 yuan (\$2,740) per transaction. To qualify, applicants must possess valid identification documents, such as the Mainland Travel Permit for Hong Kong and Macao Residents, the Mainland Travel Permit for Taiwan Residents, or the Foreign Permanent Resident ID Card. They must also have a mainland mobile phone number and a bank account within the country.

#### FTZ sees 749.39b yuan in foreign trade in 2024

The Guangdong Pilot Free Trade Zone recorded 749.39 billion yuan (\$102.57 billion) in imports and exports in 2024, marking a robust year-on-year rise of 25.6 percent. This figure accounted for 8.2 percent of Guangdong's total foreign trade value and contributed 1.8 percentage points to the province's overall foreign trade growth. This year marks the 10th anniversary of the Guangdong FTZ's establishment. Over the past decade, customs authorities have launched 68 replicable innovations to enhance the FTZ's operational efficiency. Under the port cooperation model, the average cargo dwell time has been reduced from between five to seven days to less than two days, saving enterprises more than 220 million yuan in logistic costs annually.

## Metro pass helps traders do business and explore citywide

To make travel easier for international buyers at the 137th Canton Fair, GDToday, a multi-language media platform, is providing free one-day passes for the Guangzhou Metro, along with bilingual support services.

From Monday to Wednesday the GDToday Comprehensive Service Area was set up at the Airport North and Pazhou metro stations. Global buyers received a free metro pass and exclusive GDToday merchandise by downloading the GDToday app.

The service will resume from next Wednesday to April 25. GDToday volunteers will be on-site offering assistance in English and Chinese, helping with transportation, payment methods, accommodation and more.

The metro pass is valid for 24 hours from the first use, allowing unlimited rides within that period.

Global merchants gave a thumbs-up to the services. David Zhou from



Global travelers can receive a free metro pass and exclusive GDToday merchandise simply by downloading the GDToday app. ZHAN YINI / FOR CHINA DAILY

South Korea, said the free pass is a good image of Guangzhou. He expressed gratitude for the convenience and praised the Canton Fair as the "biggest exhibition with so many bright items", highlighting its

value for purchasers. "I look forward to finding some confectionery products and also vending machines at the 137th Canton Fair," he said.

Syed Tanvir Rayhan from Bangladesh, a regular participant in the Canton Fair, found the metro pass process easy and time-saving. He is seeking gypsum powder plants, raw materials and machinery at the fair.

He said the Canton Fair provides such a convenient platform where attendees can have easy access to diverse businesses for comparison.

"You can get a lot of companies, local and also international ones here. So you can compare them easily."

Rtn K Sathasivam from India called the free pass "very helpful" for managing his schedule. He is exploring agricultural machinery and new products for import to India, citing the fair's role as a one-stop destination for international trade, where traders can always

find the latest products. Abo Malik from Egypt expressed gratitude for the 24-hour metro access, noting it would aid his exploration of Guangzhou and more importantly, the Canton Fair.

He said that he was searching for kitchen-related products and had been advised by his friends to attend the Canton Fair, as it offers everything under one roof.

This story is provided by GDToday.



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