

KIRCHDORFER NEWS

For Employees, Customers, and Partners
of Kirchdorfer Group



CONCRETE TECHNOLOGY COMPETENCE CENTER AT THE CEMENT PLANT.

The concrete technologists around
Dr. Jürgen Macht got a modern laboratory,
as well as top-class personnel reinforcement.

P. 12 – 15

PANDEMIC

Kirchdorfer Group defies the crisis
situation with extensive measures.

P. 4 – 6

QUALITY OF LIFE

Kámen a písek financed and built a
2 km long bypass in South Bohemia.

P. 20 – 21

ACQUISITION

The LUIKI concrete works in Leoben are
part of Kirchdorfer Concrete Solutions.

P. 37 – 39



Foto: © Sissi Furgler



EDITORIAL

DIFFICULT SITUATION, WELL HANDLED

The coronavirus "pandemic year" 2020 will probably be remembered for a long time by all of us. Strict hygiene measures, working from home, and short-time working arrangements for weeks have - like so many other companies - also put our company to a severe test.

But when we look back on this turbulent year in the future, one or the other positive aspect of the difficult situation will hopefully outweigh the above: For example the sensational solidarity that our workforce showed, especially in the difficult early days, as well as a rapid acceleration of digitization, which is so important for the future, and, of course, more flexible working models, such as regular telework days.

Last but not least, the planned spring edition of our KIRCHDORFER NEWS also fell victim to the coronavirus crisis. A circumstance that we have now more than compensated for with the presentation of this particularly extensive and even more interesting "annual edition". In the hope of providing you with an instructive and entertaining reading pleasure, I wish you all the best for the future. Stay healthy!

Yours sincerely,
Mag. Erich Frommwald



As a forward-looking family company, it is our mission to make important contributions to the economic future of our country.



Mag. Erich Frommwald
Head of Division
Austrian Chamber of Commerce - Upper Austria





HEAD OF INDUSTRY DIVISION

CEO IN NEW POLITICAL MISSION

The founding fathers of the Kirchdorfer cement works made a significant contribution to the economic development in Upper Austria. As new head of the "Industry Division", the CEO of Kirchdorfer Group is now also at the forefront of shaping the economic future of the country.

Taking over the Industry Division of the Upper Austrian Chamber of Commerce, which is also disproportionately influential in federal politics, was not necessarily a goal that the 59-year-old top manager was striving for. That would not have been a promising ambition anyway - since this position is traditionally occupied by well-established, Upper Austrian owners of industrial corporations. Not only is Erich Frommwald holding this office as an "employee", he is not even a native of Upper Austria ...

The Styrian, who was born and raised in Leoben, has rarely applied for a position anyway, as he tells us: "Immediately after my graduation from the University of Graz, I applied to a job advertisement in the Kleine Zeitung for the position of Controller at Perlmoser in Leoben. It got the job immediately and this was actually the only application I have ever written in my entire career ..."

He also joined the Kirchdorfer Group on somebody's recommendation - and because he was urgently needed: The Managing Director Max Machanek had at the time already "used up" a few

assistants. Erich Frommwald was given the opportunity to assist and accompany the legendary company director for a span of 10 years. After his death, Erich Frommwald was able to take his succession as the new managing director and successfully continue the path of an aggressive but sustainable expansion policy, leading it to further heights.

As Head of Industry Division in a central role

In his many years of activity as energy spokesperson for the Upper Austrian industry, Erich Frommwald also made a mark, to the point that he was asked if he was available to take the position of division chairman as successor to Günter Rübiger. Elected for a term of office of 5 years, he now helps to shape the future issues for the industry in Austria's strongest industrial state.

YEAR OF THE PANDEMIC

WITH TEAMWORK THROUGH THE CRISIS ...

In the long history of the Kirchdorfer Group, our companies already have lived through and mastered difficult periods. In 2020, the group was confronted with a completely new situation due to the global SARS-CoV-2 outbreak.

With swift and consistent measures, followed by a gradual transition to "normal operation under preventive measures", the group's reaction was responsible and conscious.

The pandemic is not over yet - but the Kirchdorfer Group is proving to be a reliable employer where the health of employees is the top priority. We take a look at the dramatic developments in spring 2020 and what's left of it ...



Social Distancing with the "Royals"

as a role model: the British monarch shows how it's done. "A wink and a nod", compared to which shaking hands is, of course, rather inelegant. She walks slowly and even her prince consort always keeps the necessary respectful distance. That is how easy it is to contribute to helping keep the virus at bay.

„Ein nettes Wort, ein Winken oder Zwinkern, reicht uns zur Begrüßung“



Monday morning, March 9th, 2020: As a massive coronavirus cluster in the Tyrolean ski resort of Ischgl had hit the headlines the day before and an imminent reaction from the Austrian government was foreseeable, Division Manager Michael Wardian gave the go-ahead for the immediate development of a range of measures to protect the employees at the Austrian precast and administrative locations of the Kirchdorfer Group in Wöllersdorf from the spread of the SARS-CoV-2 virus and to maintain the capacities of the production plants.

He commissioned an interdisciplinary team led by Günter Jungbauer and Carina Bauer, which immediately got to work. At the same time, measures for the quarries, gravel works, and ready-mixed concrete works both in Austria and abroad were already being implemented at the beginning of March on the instructions of Division Manager Armin Richter. As a result, empirical facts, and insights from these ongoing operations could already be used.

At that time, of course, nobody knew what exactly was in store for us and how best to protect against it. Corresponding hygiene measures were researched together with the known transmission routes of viral respiratory diseases. After of studying the factory premises in Wöllersdorf, plans were drawn up regarding how and where possible transmission routes of the virus could be minimized and eliminated.

"When we presented the catalogue of measures on March 11th, it read very dramatic at first glance," says Günter Jungbauer, who was HR manager at KIG at the time. "But upon closer examination, it was clear that only far-reaching and rather drastic measures can really ensure that the worst case doesn't come to pass, such as a situation in which all 400 production employees would have to be sent into quarantine all at the same time ..." - the aim of the measures was obviously to avoid such a scenario under any circumstances.

Cohorts, telework, and isolation

In addition to a number of hygiene requirements, the coronavirus package of measures, therefore, primarily defined the division of the entire company into different



Social distancing, separation of plant areas: To prevent infection routes, different parts of the plant premises were completely isolated from each other.

"cohorts" - groups of employees who were each able to ensure the functioning of the company. Practically overnight, all central administrative functions were switched to alternating telework deployment or even split up geographically between different group locations.

While employees were only allowed into the office on certain days, depending on the assignment to certain groups, practically all internal and external meetings were also prevented: No meetings were held, business trips were carried out only if absolutely unavoidable - and a strict protocol on the premises for the practically contact-free processing of deliveries to and from the factory was implemented.

At the Wöllersdorf site, the administrative building was also completely separated from the factory premises. With physical barriers installed at the corresponding crossings, the strict contact ban was also implemented structurally.

Quick response, clear communication

The fight against the "invisible danger" and the great uncertainty in the second week of March were, of course, a race against time. Thanks to the great commitment of all those involved, the organizational and infrastructural preparations could already be made on Thursday: doors were locked, the canteen blocked and converted into changing rooms for one of the two factory cohorts, and the entire infrastructure with sanitary and shower containers had been doubled in capacity.

As a result, the Wöllersdorf location was able to communicate and implement the measures almost completely from Friday, March 13th onwards - a great team effort that those involved will not soon forget:

"It was great to see how all colleagues here contributed their part and how we were able to implement the extensive measures within a very short time," recalls Carina Bauer.

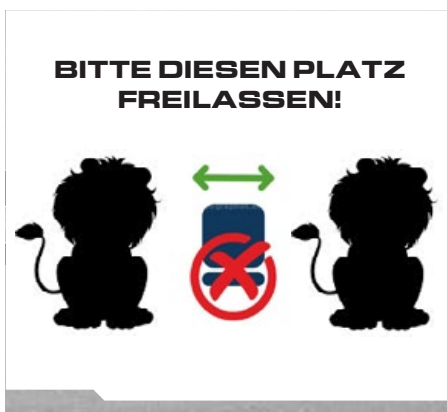


Mag. Dr. Günter Jungbauer (Head of Human Resources) and **Mag. Carina Bauer** (Head of Internal Revision) were primarily responsible for the rapid elaboration of the extensive Covid-19 measures, especially at the Wöllersdorf site.

Crisis team planning further steps

By order of Group CEO Erich Frommwald, a group-wide crisis team was set up on March 15th, 2020 for a structured approach and further uniform measures, with the involvement of the individual KIG departments. The crisis team was coordinated by Division Manager Armin Richter, who, as a long-term reserve officer, has a wealth of experience in crisis and disaster management.

From the first ordinances of the federal government to risk and financial planning and the often-amended state requirements for personnel planning, there were a number of different topics to be dealt with under constant time pressure. With precise and clear instructions via the employee portal, it was ensured that the employees were as well informed as possible and could thus also contribute their important part to the implementation of the measures.



Refinement of the original measures

Almost 8 months later, the Kirchdorfer Group is still concerned with the coronavirus challenge - because, with the upcoming autumn and winter, a second wave cannot be ruled out, as Günter Jungbauer explains: "At the moment, we are working on measures that we will be able to keep up in the long term, if necessary. After dropping the hammer in spring, now there are finer measures to follow. In the event of a further tightening of the situation, however, we are now structurally equipped to reintroduce our cohort model almost overnight".

Important experiences for the future

At this time, nobody knows for sure how the coronavirus situation will develop over the months to come - but what remains of the initial coronavirus measures can already be guessed: Not all consequences are necessarily negative! The drastic reduction in internal meetings, for instance, and the increased use of Skype and other such communication tools is certainly a consequence of the pandemic, which also has positive sides to it: The time and productivity gain through increased virtual contact can hardly be overestimated. Even with classic business trips and customer meetings, now everybody considers much more carefully which ones are necessary and which ones are not. A consequence of Covid that is certainly going to last for a long time.

Even Kirchdorfer's "Road & Traffic " Division, where a considerable part of the

workforce in the past often travelled on a plane multiple times a week, has started a radical rethink in this regard, as Division Manager Thomas Edl explained to us. He and his colleagues have never had so many evenings at home with their families as during this pandemic ... - nonetheless, work and business still continued and they all maintained communication with their numerous international contacts.

Working from home: from test to emergency and to the new standard

One department that, from the point of view of the other employees, stepped in front of the curtain in a special way during the critical week in March 2020 was the group-wide IT of Kirchdorfer Industries GmbH. The department headed by Christian Rosenbichler had to deal with the critical administrative transfer to a telework operations setup. The perfect handling and invaluable support for the colleagues working from home was something special that was very much appreciated by all employees across the company.

"The whole thing wasn't easy at all," says Christian Rosenbichler," especially for the many special applications such as our CAD workstations, which are not specifically designed for such remote operation." On the other hand, this crisis turned out to be a veritable "turbo boost" for the company's further digitization strategy - in particular, of course, the implementation of telework days for the many office users.

"Fortunately, we had already taken the first steps and conducted a test run for a telework strategy in the autumn of 2019. As a result, we were already well prepared in March", explains the IT manager. And instead of the originally planned weekly telework day, because of the coronavirus, two telework days per week are now already part of the company agreement for the time being. In addition, flexible working time regulations, which previously only existed in Wöllersdorf, have now been expanded to include the entire group.

Apart from several weeks of short-time work, lost production time and massive sales losses, Kirchdorfer Group therefore also embraces one or the other positive consequence of the crisis.

TECHNOLOGICAL TRANSFORMATION OF THE KIRCHDORFER GROUP



A COMMON-SENSE DIGITAL FUTURE

The "digital future" in the construction industry is a much-hyped topic that the media often likes to describe in a dramatic and transformative fashion. In reality, however, much of it is not only "down to earth", but, above all, already a well-established reality for a long time - especially at the automated production facilities of Kirchdorfer Concrete Solutions. Consequently, KCS recently opted for an "in-house" software solution with which increasing documentation requirements can be flexibly and sustainably covered. An exciting topic, as we were able to find out on a tour with the innovative and very practically-oriented Kirchdorfer "digitizers".

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION OF THE KIRCHDORFER GROUP

The fact that the much-vaunted "digitization" in the construction industry is not a dream of the future, but has gradually become reality for decades already, can be clearly seen in the various titles, functions, and the accumulated expertise that describe **Thomas Forejtek's** competence: CAD system manager, SAP application engineer, Software Architect and recently also "Mr. BIM".

"With the exception of BIM, everything has actually been standard for a long time - old news, so to speak. While we have been gradually automating and digitizing the precast factories since the 1980s, the networking of the various trades on the construction site itself is, however, only now taking shape", explains the specialist, who has been on the forefront of digitization for 30 years. Originally employed at the MABA plant in Gerasdorf (formerly Katzenberger), where the automated and electronically controlled production era was introduced at the end of the 1980s, he has been with Kirchdorfer Industries at the group holding company as an IT expert for CAD and ERP integration issues since 2010.

Since this year, following an organizational change, he has been based directly at Kirchdorfer Concrete Solutions - and there is a good reason for this new position: His job is to bring tangible progress directly to the ground in the various precast factories with their specific requirements. A practical challenge for which he is well-equipped thanks to the historically balanced mix of competencies in IT, SAP, CAD, construction, and precast production technology.

From prototype to corporate standard

Thomas Forejtek often puts on a helmet these days, because equipped with safety shoes and a hand scanner he now spends a good portion of his time in the production halls of the main plant in Wöllersdorf, where MABA Precast Industry is producing track slabs for the gigantic Koralmbahn railway construction project.

"The comprehensive digital recording and processing of the indi-

vidual production steps is nothing new for us," explains Forejtek: "This has been standard operating procedure for many years, especially in the production of segments for large tunnel projects. The only problem is that for these special projects we always had to rent highly specialized and correspondingly expensive software solutions for the respective project duration. From now on, however, we are in a position to cover all the requirements with our own mobile devices and systems, feeding the information directly into our ERP system (i.e., SAP)."

The new processes required, as well as their mobile application with handheld devices, will be gradually rolled out across the divisions by the Kirchdorfer IT department under the direction of Christian Rosenbichler. As for the solution's first-time application in the slab track production process at the Wöllersdorf plant, all essential production steps are digitally documented and linked to each other by the production employees using hand scanners, so that in the end a seamless documentation of the entire production process is available electronically - from the formwork to the reinforcement parts to the completion and storage of the end products.

The whole thing can be imagined as a digital file, where all relevant information is linked by means of clearly assigned serial numbers that are also permanently cast into the finished concrete part in a form that is legible for both computers and humans. The whole process goes from the original CAD drawing and planning all the way to the warehousing so that all logistics processes such as procurement, storage, delivery, and invoicing can take place in an integrated manner.

The challenge is more organizational than technical

The defining factor about this newly developed solution is not so much the technological refinement, but quite simply the fact that a self-developed "standard system" is subsequently and flexibly available for the most varied of production situations and require-



Production of track slabs for the Koralmbahn railway project: At the MABA plant in Wöllersdorf, all the essential production steps up to the finished product are documented by the production workers using hand scanners.

ments across the entire group of companies. Instead of investing in "temporary" industry solutions for very specific large-scale projects, the newly developed Kirchdorf "template" system is continuously expanded with project-specific additional functions that arise from each particular use-case. This will soon be the case, for example, with the tunnel segment production at the Katzenberg Precast Industry production facility in Wiesing, Tyrol: A large commission from Switzerland [see pages 32-33] entails highly specific documentation requirements. In the production of the "high-tech" segments made of fiber concrete, for example, the concreting and curing process is documented with seamless temperature curves - an additional requirement that can be flexibly expanded in the new template system at any time and is implemented in cooperation with the Tyrolean colleagues.

"The challenge with digital progress", says IT manager Rosenbichler, "is not so much the software functionality, but a solid basis of well-thought-out processes. Because there is nothing worse than digitizing bad processes! Simple solutions - good, clean and, above all, implemented consistently - are often far more useful than the most sophisticated software tools."

Coronavirus as a digitization accelerator

The fact that the seamless "digital file" is not just a topic on the factory floor, in the controlling department or the CAD offices became very obvious to everybody in the course of the coronavirus crisis in spring 2020: Suddenly, the good old personnel paper file on the office shelf was, of course, no longer tangible from the new telework setting ...

It is, of course, clear to all users that there is still a lot to be done in terms of reducing and digitizing old-school paperwork. In the meantime, the "BIM experts" and "construction site digitizers" also still have a rather large challenge ahead of them - because, on a complex construction site, the goal is to let the different trades all pull together on the same digital rope. In any case, Kirchdorfer Group is ready. A first BIM pilot project with a long-term partner from the construction industry is already being planned. We will, of course, stay tuned and report when the rubber meets the road.



In our digitization strategy, solid processes are at least as important as software. There is nothing worse than digitizing bad processes.



Dipl. Ing. (FH) Christian Rosenbichler
Head of Information Technology,
Kirchdorfer Industries GmbH



Kirchdorfer Concrete Solutions **CEO Mag. Michael Wardian** is also a proponent of digital networking. Integrated SAP solutions are not confined to the administration anymore but are already employed on the factory floor for documentation and feedback from production.

KIRCHDORFER CEMENT



TRADITIONAL FURNACE IGNITION 2020

A FIERY FAREWELL ...



This year's furnace ignition ceremony on February 5th, 2020 was all about Kirchdorf's former mayor Wolfgang Veitz. The long-standing community leader, who shortly afterwards handed over the office to Vera Pramberger, paid the cement works the honor of sending the kiln on its new journey.

A good and harmonious understanding with the local population and the various institutions in Kirchdorf has always been an important concern of the cement works since it was founded. Not only has the township literally grown around the imposing plant over the last 130 years, but the Kirchdorfer Group now also proudly carries the name of Kirchdorf out into the wide world! This mutual respect and great trust were always an important constant for Wolfgang Veitz. The employees, on the other hand, were very pleased with the hearty snack that the outgoing mayor invited them to for his farewell. Bless God!

Former Mayor Wolfgang Veitz at the ignition of the furnace: A reason to celebrate ... - if you consider that a total of 40,000 man-hours from 170 employees went into the winter inspection, which was carried out in a record time of just 30 days. A great undertaking, at the end of which a significant tradition was upheld.

ALTERNATIVE FUELS AND RAW MATERIALS

ALFUMA IS JUST ALL FIRED UP

When it comes to using alternative raw materials and fuels, the Kirchdorfer cement works has been an innovative pioneer for many years. To ensure that the company stays on top of the issue in the future, the team responsible for material cycles at ALFUMA GmbH has been expanded accordingly.

The company's pioneering role in alternative and sustainable material cycles in the Kirchdorf cement plant was an important achievement of the former plant manager Anton Secklehner - with the active support of his son Jürgen, who for several years managed the procurement of alternative raw materials and fuels through ALFUMA GmbH, which was founded especially for this purpose in 2011.

With Jürgen Secklehner leaving his position and joining Abfall Recycling Austria in Vienna in autumn 2020, ALFUMA's human resources have been restructured accordingly. Reinhard Beichtbuchner from Styria, who only recently reinforced the sales team at the Kirchdorfer cement works and who, due to his training and experience as a construction technician, was also entrusted with the construction of the new concrete laboratory, joined ALFUMA and will provide his many talents as "Market Manager".

His role now is not only to redefine the structures of ALFUMA, but also to build up and expand a corresponding network of both suppliers and customers. Even if ALFUMA mainly supplies its own cement works with substitute fuel and substitute raw materials, there are still new challenges and changed material compositions that require a constant adjustment of the supply arrangements - e.g. by covering the material requirements for the newly commissioned flash dryer.

Alternative fuels through group holdings

The network of suppliers is diverse. SRP, in which the Kirchdorfer Group holds a 50% stake, covers a significant part as a supplier of substitute fuels and substitute raw materials. KIAS, which is operated as a joint venture with the Asamer Group, is used as the supplier of tire fluff. As for the substitute raw materials that are used in clinker production (mainly recycled foundry sands, rust ashes, fly ash and brick chippings or construction waste), ALFUMA not only procures the required material internally from UWT, but also from long-term partners such as the Steyrermühl paper factory, Lenzing AG as well as various foundries in the area.



Since September 2020, the procurement of alternative raw materials, and fuels through ALFUMA GmbH has been directed by **Reinhard Beichtbuchner, M.Sc.** as Market Manager, and **Ruth Hatzenbichler B.Sc.** as Operational Manager.

In the interests of diversification and the long-term safeguarding of all material cycles, this network is constantly being expanded and optimized.

Reinhard Beichtbuchner receives support in the internal implementation from Ruth Hatzenbichler, who has been working at ALFUMA since 2013 and following her maternity leave has joined the cement plant in a kind of double role: The agendas of the cement production and ALFUMA overlap in many areas such as waste law issues and various submissions to the respective authorities.

As the head of the ALFUMA back office, she and her team are now responsible for implementing alternative fuel and raw material supplies. This means that under the management of CEO Erich Frommwald, ALFUMA is optimally positioned for the future and will continue to be well integrated into the cement plant.



New concrete laboratory on the Kirchdorfer cement works premises:

The new competence center offers sufficient space and optimal infrastructure to work on research and development and to support the customers of the cement plant with concrete technology.

NEW LABORATORY, NEW EXPERTISE

COMPETENCE IN CONCRETE TECHNOLOGY

—

With a brand-new infrastructure and the addition of another high-ranking expert, the Kirchdorfer cement plant is decisively expanding its concrete technology competence. That does not just mean an increased service offering for cement customers, but also additional know-how for the future.

After 30 years in the construction chemicals industry (most recently as technical and commercial director for the chemical giant BASF), Markus Kroneder recently strengthened the ranks of top-class concrete technologists in Kirchdorf to support not only the cement plant and its customers with his expertise but also the other concrete manufacturers and users of the group in the long term. As a proven "Miraculix" of sorts and long-time chairman of the Austrian Construction Chemicals Association, his mission is to add know-how and raise the possibilities of the increasingly important concrete admixtures to a new level - both technically and economically.

"The development of highly effective cement-based concrete admixtures is becoming increasingly important nowadays," explains the industry insider, "not least as part of ROADMAP 2050 for the European cement industry for CO₂-neutral cement production."

The ambitious climate protection goals, which cannot yet be achieved with today's technology, will gradually reduce the propor-

tion of clinker in cement - a fact that also poses major challenges for the development of appropriate construction chemical additives.

However, the possible applications are already quite diverse today. The choice and use of the right admixture for the respective cement is ultimately also decisive for whether the properties desired by the customer are achieved during concreting.

In order to better understand customer requirements and, if necessary, to better analyze potential problems, the Kirchdorfer cement plant is not only increasing its expertise in this area but also the infrastructure: The new concrete laboratory, which went into operation at the beginning of 2020, now has the best working and research conditions in order to be able to implement the possibilities and subsequently also new product developments.

The goal is clear: to provide cement customers with an attractive overall package for the desired concrete quality.

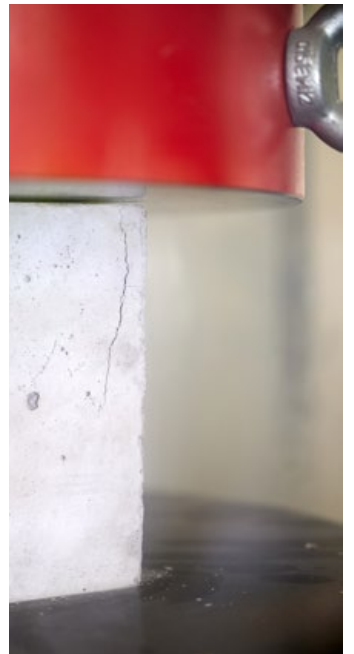
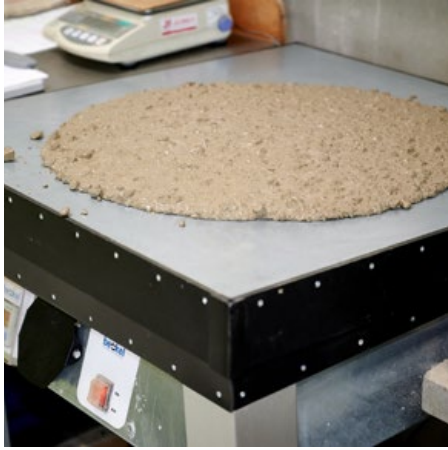


Ing. Markus Kroneder (left), a veteran of the construction chemicals industry, has recently joined the Kirchdorf cement plant as Market Manager for concrete admixtures. Right: **Dr. Jürgen Macht** has been the cement plant's highly respected concrete technology expert for many years.



A tour of the new concrete laboratory in the Kirchdorfer cement works: With a well-stocked warehouse for aggregates and a new mixing plant, with which the production conditions in large concrete mixing plants can be simulated extremely well, clean and productive work is now easily achieved.

The concrete tests in the new laboratory are carried out by **Franz Weissengruber** in Kirchdorf's cement works not only for his own use but in some cases also on behalf of customers. The expansion of the technical possibilities in the concrete laboratory not only benefits the cement works and its customers, but also the various sister companies of the group that are active in concrete production.



APPRENTICES AT THE KIRCHDORF
CEMENT PLANT

FIT FOR THE JOB.
FIT FOR LIFE!

Marcel
Mechanical Engineer
in his 2nd Apprenticeship year

WIRTSCHAFTS



Sebastian
Plant and Operations
Technician, 1st year



Kerstin
Lab Technician
3rd year



Paul
Lab Technician
2nd year

APPRENTICE TRAINING

The future of the Kirchdorfer cement works will one day be in the hands of our youngest. Until the young talents are ready to take on major challenges and responsibilities, not only solid professional training but also personal growth is promoted. That is why there is a comprehensive training program in the cement plant in which the apprentices learn not only for work but also for life.

In cooperation with a well-known seminar provider, Kirchdorf's apprenticeship training goes far beyond the purely technical. Among other things and with training modules on topics such as good behavior in business life, economic thinking and responsible use of company resources are also part of the program, as is the occasional public lecture event. The apprentices rather appreciate the program, as they explained to us in unison when we came to visit them at their workplaces. Above all, however, they love the energy and comprehensive coaching in Kirchdorf's apprenticeship training ...

Kerstin, who is in her third year of training in the chemistry laboratory, has benefited enormously from the Kirchdorfer model, as she explains to us: "I had already started a carpenter's apprenticeship at another company. Essentially it was just cleaning and tidying up. In the cement works, it's exactly the opposite and I can actually develop." Her laboratory colleague **Paul** also agrees: "I originally received a rejection, but my persistence paid off in full." **Sebastian**, who is being trained in the electrical workshop, often has a stressful time when a system fails. "But I can learn a lot here," he explains. Just like **Marcel**, who, straight out of school, landed in the metalworking shop a year ago: "Great company, great atmosphere, great support!" In a word: The conditions for developing a successful career (and life) trajectory are apparently excellent at the Kirchdorfer cement works!

COVID CHALLENGE AT PIATRA SI NISIP



ROCK MINING BY REMOTE CONTROL

First the bad news: Despite intensive efforts and even though the quarries of Kirchdorfer Construction Minerals are operating at the highest technological level, we are still a long way from extracting rock with the help of robots and autonomous vehicles. The good news, however, is that the extremely difficult challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic in the Seini quarry were mastered as well as possible by our committed flesh and blood employees. With appropriate improvisation and crisis-related innovations ...

Fortunately, the quarries of the Kirchdorfer Group in Central Europe and the Balkans have been spared a total coronavirus lockdown to date. However, the Europe-wide closure of the borders and other circumstances at the Seini quarry meant that the team there had to make ends meet for over 3 months without any management: Andra Pasca, who has been supporting the Seini management for a year, was at home under lucky circumstances on parental leave. Philipp Lechte was stuck in the Austrian headquarters (or working from home) as a result of the lockdown, and Dušan Čellár, the father, landlord, and good spirit of the

quarry, just made it into self-quarantine in his native Slovakia at the very last moment.

In a word: no authorized signatory of the management team was present, and above all, no one with the necessary experience and oversight for the ongoing rock blasting operations would ensure that all the framework conditions for productive work were met. In other words: in order to keep production going, a new strategy was required from mid-March onwards. While the Romanian colleagues in sales and shift management were doing everything humanly possible, Dušan Čellár was sitting at home in his

office, studying drone images of the designated mining zones and trying to sketch the placement of the explosive charges by remote control based on the best possible photographic assessment.

Fortunately, it all worked reasonably well and accident-free for the entire three months. In June, however, the end of the road in terms of safely extractable material was reached. In our interview, the experienced mining expert reviews the crazy year 2020 ...

DIPL.-ING. DUŠAN ČELLÁR IN OUR SKYPE INTERVIEW



The 57-year-old mining expert from Košice in Slovakia heads the Seini quarry of SC Pietra si Nisip s.r.l. in northern Romania. For three long months, he was able to use his indispensable experience and expertise exclusively virtually from his home office. Conveniently and in line with this tested mode of communication, Kirchdorfer News asked him for a Skype interview!

KN: How did you survive the lockdown in your office in Slovakia?

DC: It wasn't funny. Somehow it felt like a dress rehearsal for retirement - walking the dog twice a day and staying at home with the wife in the evening. Fortunately, I still have a few years until then to commit myself to the sustainable future of our quarry.

KN: You were in contact with the quarry virtually around the clock "online". How did that work?

DC: Let's put it this way: It worked. But in the end it was really five minutes to midnight. When I came back to the quarry in mid-June, it was like coming back home after a long journey. Everything is still there and the house hasn't burned down ... but the fridge is empty and everything you need next week is out!

KN: Are you satisfied with the work your team has done while the entire management team was away?

DC: I am very happy that everything went well. I see myself as part of the team - let's say I am the father who always controls everything

and sees to it that everything is right. Our team worked very well and diligently during my absence. Nevertheless, I am very happy that I can now see for myself and on the premises that everything is going well here every day. In terms of mining technology, to be honest, not a single stone was available after the lockdown, and some of the machinery was also no longer operational because our service partner was also in lockdown.

KN: Do you also see the positive aspects of the unexpected crisis situation?

DC: Yes, definitely. We practically plan for the future of the quarry year in and year out - for all eventualities and, of course, for risks. But nobody expected the situation we were suddenly confronted with! In this respect, personal security policies and many other plans for the future of the quarry are now even more important and up to date than ever.



NEW ACCESS ROAD



Bypass road for the municipality of Ševětín:
Established and financed by Kámen a písek, spol. s r.o.

KÁMEN A PÍSEK CARES FOR QUALITY OF LIFE

Since the completion of the new Ševětín bypass, trucks no longer have to drive through the center of the South Bohemian municipality on their way to the quarry. The quarry operator is once again proving its sense of social responsibility: the construction of the 2 km long road was fully financed and carried out by Kámen a písek.

Not for the first time - and probably not for the last time either - has Kámen a písek (KAP), the quarry operator based in Český Krumlov, vigorously demonstrated its sense of social responsibility and good understanding with the people living near its quarries: There were first considerations as early as 2008 to build a new driveway for the Ševětín quarry so that truck traffic does not have to pass through the center of the market town with 1,400 inhabitants.

Ševětín is not only home to the largest of the ten KAP quarries in Bohemia, but also one of the most productive in the entire Czech Republic - a fact that naturally generates increased truck traffic. An initiative to improve the quality of life of the local population was therefore a particularly important concern of the management and shareholders of

KAP. Original plans were initially made with a view to the future construction of a new rail corridor. But when the rail project was delayed year after year (it is still not on the rails ...), KAP decided to build the new bypass completely on its own (and on its own account).

Private road construction initiative

As is customary in public road construction, many years of negotiations, planning, submissions, land purchases, and lengthy reallocations followed - until the first section of the new bypass road could finally be built in 2016. Dipl.-Ing. Otakar Veselý explains:

"We would have liked to have implemented the whole project earlier and faster, because massive deliveries of stone left our quarry practically every minute during



Co-owner Ing. Otakar Veselý is pleased about the successful completion of the Kámen a písek bypass.

the construction of the D3 motorway in the region. Nevertheless, we are very pleased that we were able to successfully complete the second construction phase at the end of 2019 thanks to the excellent support from the community and other institutions. Truck traffic in the town center is finally history!"

Major project for quality of life

The entire bypass was planned, commissioned, and financed by Kámen a písek - even a considerable part of the required land was acquired by the quarry operator.

KAP Managing Director Pavel Fučík describes the scope of the project: "For the last 900 meter long section alone, 32,000 tons of rock and around 2,600 tons of asphalt were moved and deployed by Swietelsky stavební s.r.o., the company that we commissioned to carry out the bypass project. We invested a total of 23 million kroner (approx. EUR 900,000) for the 2 km long stretch of road."

At the beginning of November 2019, the time had finally come and the new Ševětín bypass was opened with an official ceremony and celebrations and presented to the public. Since then, calm has returned to the tranquil village 16 km northeast of Budweis.



Public road, privately built: With the 2 km long bypass road, Kámen a písek contributes to the common good and to an increase in the quality of life of the village residents.



Market town of Ševětín: In the center of the village around the St. Nicholas Church, calm has returned since the opening of the new bypass in November 2019.
Photo: Xth-Floor, Wikimedia Creative Commons



A reason to celebrate: The heavy trucks that all had to drive right through the center of the 1,400 inhabitants' community are now finally a thing of the past.



Opening ceremony: Managing Director Ing. Pavel Fučík (1st from left) and co-owner Ing. Otakar Veselý (3rd from left) officially opened the new access road for public use.

KPE / EXCURSION TO BRDANJAK QUARRY



“

"Young professionals with the correct attitudes are key for the productive future of our quarry."

.....

Vaso Kandic, MSc
Managing Director, Kamen i Pesak d.o.o.



YOUNG TALENTS COME TO VISIT

The team in the Brdanjak quarry in Serbia coped surprisingly well with the first major Covid-19 wave in the spring of 2020. In fact, even the ambitious production and sales targets were exceeded while virtually all of Europe was in lockdown. That shows not only that construction sites were still going on, but also that the team of Kamen i Pesak d.o.o. is highly motivated. To ensure that it stays that way in the future, the company is committed to the active promotion of young talents.

In the industrial city of Lazarevac in the Belgrade district, with a population of 60,000, there is not only a legendary football club that carries the title of the famous Kolubara River, but also a renowned higher technical educational institution. Reason enough to invite the prospective engineers of the "Kolubara Lazarevac" school along with their director and teaching staff for a varied and educational day in the quarry: After all, who doesn't want to be there in person, when nature's high-quality rock material is being mined and produced by means of boreholes, blasting, excavators and other interesting machinery. The idea behind all this is, of course, not only to separate the different rock fractions cleanly but also to filter out future engineers with an innate or otherwise acquired love for working with rocks! Especially those young talented people who want to play permanently in the top league ... - just like at Kamen i Pesak.



Junior team in quarry dress: The interested students from the technical college in Lazarevac (Serbia) had a whole day to find out what they have always wanted to know about working in a quarry. Anybody who is looking to pursue a profession in rocks will obviously be particularly popular with the talent scouts at Kamen i Pesak.



POSTCARDS FROM RADMER

The municipality of Radmer an der Stube, west of Eisenerz, has been a hunting ground and summer resort for emperors and kings for centuries. A spectacular rockfall construction has recently been added to the illustrious sights of the popular pilgrimage community.

Anyone who, as a visitor or tourist, turns off the Eisenstraße near Hieftau and drives through the narrow gorge and dozens of curves along the approx. 7 km long access road to Radmer, usually comes for an alpine hike on the famous "Habsburg Mile". Or for a visit to the famous church donated by Austrian Emperor Franz Joseph, who also built a beautiful hunting lodge nearby. Visitors interested in geology can, of course, also visit a late medieval copper mine.

The latest visitor attraction on Radmerstrasse, however, is not only a delight for engineers and concrete aficionados, but also for drivers in general: A spectacular rockfall barrier at the foot of the so-called

"Steinerne Jungfrau" (Stone Virgin) now ensures that the L127 Radmerstrasse can be used all year round despite the frequently occurring rockfalls. For that purpose, the provincial government of Styria has invested a total of 2.7 million euros in massive rockfall structures that are certainly unparalleled in the entire Alps.

To counter the danger of falling rocks as calculated by the University of Graz, a precast concrete structure with extremely dense reinforcement has been put up. Such a system would probably even have caused astonishment with the stoic old emperor ...



15 gigantic pillars manufactured by RAUTER protect the 120 m long road section in the area of the "Steinerne Jungfrau". The 28-ton precast elements hold cantilever arms on which rockfall nets are stretched across the entire width of the road.

MEGA-PROJECT FOR RAUTER



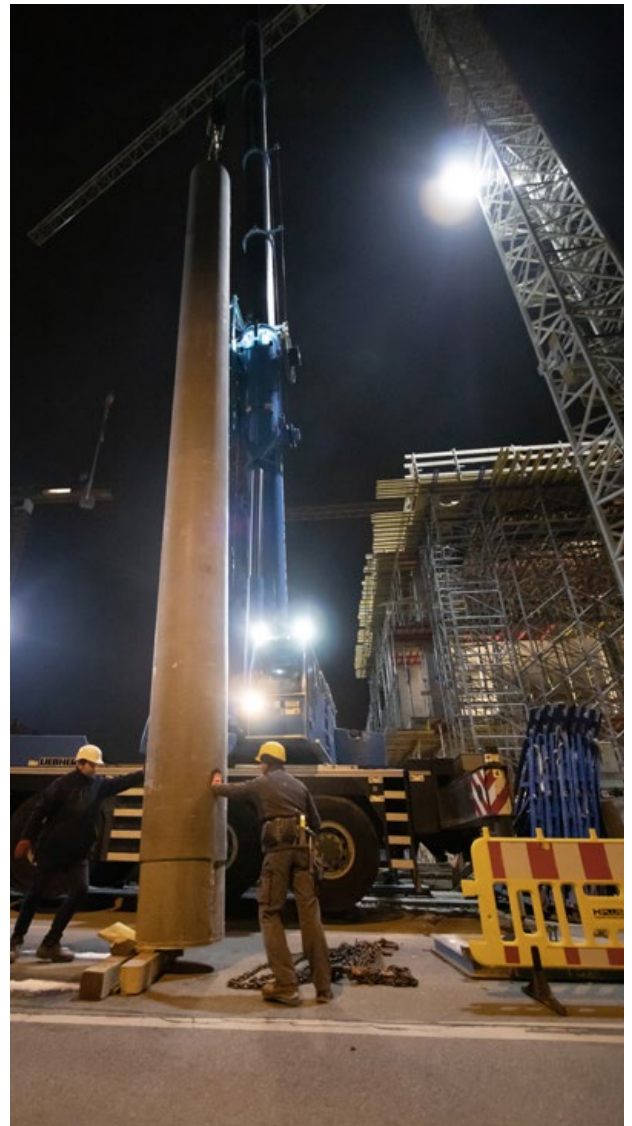
NICESHOPS PALDAU: E-Commerce flying high

Online retail is booming, and not just since the outbreak of the coronavirus crisis. While the gigantic 3rd expansion stage of the logistics center at the East Styrian logistics processor and shop provider "Niceshops" near Feldbach has not even been completed, the next expansion stage is already being planned. In any case, very nice for RAUTER: Of the total investment of 15 million Euro, almost 10% went into the massive precast concrete elements alone, which were required to double the logistics space by a further 20,000 m². Niceshops was founded by Roland Fink in 2007 as a one-person company. 13 years later, the company is already sending 1 million parcels per year across half of Europe, with a trajectory significantly trending upward.

.....

ROTOP® POWER for Vienna's Marina Tower

The 84 Rotop® columns were installed in a spectacular way, in the 39-storey lighthouse project on Wiener Handelskai: During a long winter night (with no traffic to slow the transport), the 13-meter-long columns were lifted from above through the recesses in the ceiling that had already been built. This saved the installers the costs for the otherwise usual heavy-duty stands. Speaking of heavy loads: each column is designed for a load of 32,000 kN - which means that an 18-t column contains a total of 6 t of reinforcing steel. For the manufacturing of these columns at the Micheldorf site, MABA needed a specially certified welder, special quality assurance, and a 3,000-page expert evaluation. Not exactly the typical everyday product flying "off the shelf" ...



KIRCHDORFER CAREERS

In the Spotlight: NORBERT SCHUSTER

At the KCS headquarters in Wöllersdorf, he is actually only a visitor - but since Norbert Schuster has been responsible for the entire civil engineering portfolio as part of the new business area organization, his presence for meetings in Lower Austria has increased substantially. Professionally, the Styrian, who was born in Edelsbach near Feldbach in Southeast Styria, is "really at home" at TIBA, where, as a managing director, he has been and is largely responsible for the company's ongoing success.

"Every day, we deliver several hundred tons of concrete rings and various other civil engineering products from our four TIBA production sites with an average of 25 trucks in motion. For this to work so well in the long term, it is extremely important that every single employee is committed and that everyone pulls together. There is nothing worse for a company than demotivated employees", explains the TIBA managing director. In his private life, too, Norbert Schuster relies first and foremost on harmony: "If there's trouble in my personal life - and that is the most important thing anyway - then nothing will work out in the job either!" In any case, his family life is unlikely to be out of order, since his job is going so very well: the civil engineering agendas of Kirchdorfer Concrete Solutions are certainly in good hands.



Norbert Schuster relies on loyalty and cohesion: "As you go through the start, so you go through the goal" – a motto of personal integrity that was given to him by a former patron and companion. Is that maybe the secret behind his success?!

MOVEBLOC - Charging Station for E-Bikes



Presented as "MOVEBLOC", the latest innovation by Kirchdorfer Concrete Solutions is ready to go and easy to place at the desired location. The charging stations are equipped with intelligent charging systems, in which e-bikes can be parked and charged conveniently without bringing your own charger. A massive bar construction to securely attach the often expensive e-bikes is of course also part of the concept. The first two reference installations were implemented this summer in the tourist communities of Bad Waltersdorf and Bad Blumau. The MOVEBLOC charging stations have been constructed in cooperation with the Styrian metal manufacturing company Ferk Metallbau, who provided the elegant aluminium roofing.



SPECTACULAR LIFE'S WORK FOR EQUESTRIAN SPORTS

Monika Schwarz-Annawitt, MA / Mühleck Equestrian Academy

Sometimes in life, everything just comes together perfectly - and then something magical arises! This applies not only to the largest and probably most beautiful precast order in the 50-year history of KAMMEL Ges.m.b.H. but also to the life and work of its illustrious clients. With the planning and construction of the "Mühleck Equestrian Academy", the Annawitt family has truly created a masterpiece - for people and animals. We were allowed to take a look inside the sacred halls, which are designed and built in order to further the professional level of dressage riding in Austria.

Even if Austria has the most famous horses in the "most beautiful riding arena in the world" with the Spanish Riding School in Vienna, the Alpine region still has development potential in international dressage. With Monika Schwarz-Annawitt activating this slumbering potential with top-level tutoring and the provision of ideal infrastructure, the dressage sport now benefits from the passion of a talented lady who neither grew up in Austria nor with horses ...

When career and passion harmonize

Monika Schwarz-Annawitt never really had much to do with horses. As a child, the Stuttgart-born Swabian was a guest at the pony riding school - the fact that her mother used to send her to the basement for a change of clothes because of the horse smell was not necessarily the start of a great passion. Instead, her life path not only led her to the lifelong discipline of a successful swimming competitor and long-distance runner but also to solid training as a draftsman and state-certified construction technician. As a result,

she was no less ambitious in her job than in sport, and within a very short period of time, she was in a managerial position - in a large engineering office where she was entrusted with the construction of race tracks and driving safety centers. The popular Lausitzring DTM race track between Berlin and Dresden, for example, was built to her design and under her construction supervision.

Those 15 years in the engineering company were just the perfect basis to prepare her for the upcoming tasks that fate had later entrusted to her in Austria: After self-employment as a business mediator and as the wife of the former ÖMV manager Gerhard Annawitt, she not only entered his life but also the "A1" petrol station chain he founded in 1994: "That was an interesting time and as managing director, I worked like crazy for 10 years," the now 53-year-old manager tells us.

The hard work had paid off, of course: When Gerhard Annawitt went



RECORD CONTRACT AWARDED TO KAMMEL

It's not just the column-free rondeau that is 26 meters in diameter all previous records, but also the entire equestrian facility.



into well-deserved retirement in 2018 with the sale of the booming chain, there was, of course, enough substance and experience to really get into some new passion (and an entertaining retirement). And this is where the horses come into play: 10 years ago, Gerhard Annawitt was looking for a leisure activity for his busy wife out of a guilty conscience - especially to shorten her long days during the many hunting holidays in Hungary ...

"To be honest, at first I wasn't exactly convinced of the idea of taking up riding as a sport. But when I was confronted with the typical horse smell for the first time in the riding shop near our hunting seat, I suddenly knew ... that's it!" The childhood memories have obviously left their mark and as a trained and disciplined competitive athlete, Monika Schwarz-Annawitt was naturally well equipped for picking up the new leisure activity quite rapidly. So, she got off to a quick start in her new passion - and with her second competition horse in her second year, she already won the silver medal at her first major tournament!

And now - years later - all biographical threads come together, so to speak, in a single, monumental undertaking ...

Sports facility in a class of its own

The sum of 15 years of experience in the planning of sports facilities,

an impressive fortune, and an impressive dressage career is now called "Mühleck Equestrian Academy". The "magnum opus" and joint life's work of the Annawitt couple is designed to attract the international dressage elite and accommodate both training and tournament events in the highest 5 star league.

The elegant facility, which was built on the 6 hectare area of the former Sturm Graz training center in a castle park, in the idyllic Murau floodplains south of Graz, has been planned down to the last detail: driveways, covered walkways, and visual connections between the two large halls, as well as two roundabouts with a diameter of 26 meters. Equally impressive, the various other stables and boxes with front gardens and the open-air event area with grandstand are not only perfectly thought out, but also a feast for the eyes with over 6,000 m² of meticulously laid paving stones. The ingenious curve radii alone (see race track construction) not only ensure wellbeing and serenity for the horse and the supervisor but also ensure that none of the large dressage horse semitrailers ever have to reverse on their way through the facility.

The buildings themselves and the entire architecture are a dream anyway and make the Spanish riding school serious competition in terms of ambience. All this is ensured not least by huge precast concrete elements ...

A woman with long blonde hair, wearing a white lace dress and a white jacket, is standing in a stable. She is looking at a brown horse with a white blaze on its face. She has her finger to her lips in a 'shh' gesture. The horse is wearing a black halter and white protective boots on its lower legs. The background shows the interior of a stable with wooden beams and windows.

“Do I get a little kiss?”

With the now 15-year-old Hanoverian “**Banderras M**”, Monika Schwarz-Annawit celebrated her first tournament successes in 2013. In the facilities of the Mühleck Equestrian Academy, he has now found a new home together with the host’s other competition horses.

The finest room climate provided by KAMMEL

"Concrete is actually extremely unusual as a building material for equestrian facilities - but from my experience, I am absolutely convinced of the many advantages compared to the typical wood and metal constructions", the client enthuses: "Just the ingenious indoor climate - we can now continue our training schedule at pleasant temperatures even on the hottest summer days. And we will also have corresponding advantages in winter. The implementation and assembly of the prefabricated parts by the company KAMMEL was just a perfect dream, there is no other way to call it. I am really excited about the great work and the friendliness of the staff! In general, all of our professionals have done absolutely top work here."

Ms. Schwarz-Annawitt, you have to know, generally calculates to the 4th decimal place. The fact that the dimensions of the exercise hall, at 60.001 and 19.999 meters, turned out almost as precise as her financial accounting, impressed her almost as much as the production of the precast concrete parts for the large rondeau:

"At 11 meters high, we were already at the limits of the precast construction process. The result is absolutely fabulous. The joints, the indoor climate, and the whole atmosphere ... I couldn't think of a better place where horse and rider can optimally develop their respective skills!" This is how Monika Schwarz-Annawitt sums up the successful completion of the construction project. And we have to agree - it's hard to imagine a more beautiful place.



We are proud to be part of this great showcase project and have done our best to help implement the vision of the builders as precisely as possible.



Bmstr. Dipl.-Ing. Franz Strobl

Managing Director, KAMMEL Ges.m.b.H.

NEW CONCRETE MIXING PLANT WITH GOD'S BLESSING

The opening of the new 30-meter-high concrete mixing tower on the premises of KAMMEL GmbH took place with only a small celebration, but with God's blessing - so that both the ready-mix concrete and the concrete for the precast plant will flow in abundance and in the best quality in the future.

Pastor Alois Puntingam-Juritsch and Harald Pöttl, Vice-Mayor of Grafendorf bei Hartberg, celebrated the opening of the new, ultra-modern concrete mixing plant together with Franz Strobl, the managing director and co-owner, as well as the employees of the East Styrian company.

The tower, which can be seen from afar, now houses two efficient concrete mixers that can handle both the ready-mix concrete business and the in-house prefabricated parts manufacturing efficiently and without waiting times. The environmentally friendly mixing plant with reduced dust and dirt pollution as well as a new recycling plant form the basis for the company's continued success in the coming decades and thus also help to secure over 150 high-quality jobs in this region in the long term. With God's blessing and the good wishes of the local community representatives, nothing stands in the way of a productive future.



Ceremonial Opening: Pastor Mag. Alois Puntingam-Juritsch and Vice-Mayor Harald Pöttl were the guests of honor at the opening of the new concrete mixing plant.



KATZENBERGER FERTIGTEILINDUSTRIE

AVANT-GARDE IN AUSTRIA'S FAR WEST

After spectacular record results and several years in which production technology was “pushed to the limit”, the KATZENBERGER Fertigteileindustrie GmbH site in Wiesing entered a phase of consolidation and factory renovation for a new major order in 2020. But that has hardly changed anything in terms of the workload ...

Viewed from the branch headquarters in Lower Austria, the westernmost location of Kirchdorfer Concrete Solutions in the Tyrolean Inn Valley is half a world away. Nevertheless, the factory premises of the renowned KATZENBERGER Fertigteileindustrie GmbH are actually “right in the center” of some of the most exciting export markets of the entire group ...

These splendid prospects were also a reason why **Stefan Kizlink**, a native of Wiener Neustadt, got eventually stuck in Wiesing a few years ago – as managing director of the traditional company that is run together with the Tyrolean entrepreneur family Fröschl: Before that, the graduate in business administration had done various internships in production and assembly and familiarized himself with precast concrete parts at MABA

before he was finally hired as a controller in 2008. After he was entrusted with the implementation of SAP in the Tyrolean branch, he also dealt intensively with concrete technology and production engineering. At the end of 2013, he took over the management of the KATZENBERGER plant and thus also the technical and commercial responsibility. And since then he has doubled sales ...

Strategically positioned in the right place

Wiesing is not just the gateway to the famous Zillertal, as he describes his excitement to live and work in Tyrol: “The once-in-a-century Brenner Base Tunnel project on the border with Italy has been an important part of our corporate success for years. In addition to that, the huge southern German export market is practically just a stone’s throw away in the other direction. Now,

however, we have fully focused our efforts on Switzerland! ”

Major contract from the Swiss Federation

The export coup par excellence is a new direct plant connection to the railroad, which leads, among other things, to the middle of far-away Switzerland: “We have a significant cost advantage on the Swiss market, provided we can cover the delivery distance with an efficient and sustainable logistics concept. The direct train connection, which we are currently implementing right from our storage area, opens up all possibilities for us in the future”, explains Stefan Kizlink.

The infrastructure expansion was made possible, among other things, by a current major order from the Swiss canton of Glarus. A new safety tunnel is being built there alongside

the almost 7 km long Kerenzerberg tunnel on Lake Walen – with the help of 17,000 tunnel segments that will be manufactured in Wiesing starting in October this year. To this end, a new 40 t gantry crane is currently being installed and the railroad is being led over several hundred meters directly to the storage area.

Diversified portfolio, high degree of digitization

The Tyrolean workforce took the major order as an opportunity to fundamentally upgrade the plant, which in addition to civil engineering products also successfully produces noise protection and restraint systems. In cooperation with the Kirchdorfer Group IT, a complete production monitoring and control system is currently being developed that not only meets the high documentation requirements of the Swiss customers, but also the wildest dreams of SAP nerds: The new system not only logs exact temperature curves during concreting but also automatically documents the hardening process in the heated formwork, which is optimized for fiber-reinforced concrete. The whole thing is embedded in an overall digital picture of the company, from the preparation of the offer to the reordering of parts. In any case, there is enough to do for the Tyroleans - and the starting shot has not even been fired for the next construction phase in the Brenner Base Tunnel. If the green light is given, then the next plant expansion is pending!



With the country-specific approval and a rail-based logistics concept, the Swiss market is now wide open for our products.

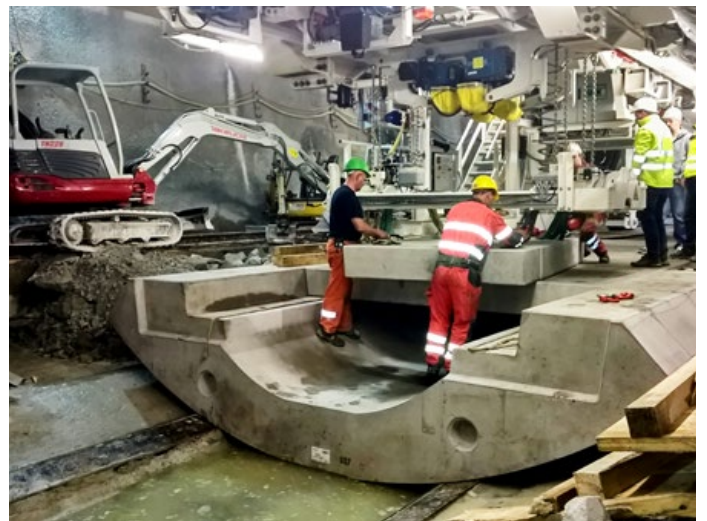


Mag. Stefan Kizlink

Managing Director, KATZENBERGER Fertigteilindustrie GmbH



Success with PHONOBLOC® and DELTABLOC®: Highly sought after in Austria and Germany. Left: Noise protection installation A12 / Kufstein.



Base segments for the Brenner Base Tunnel: With segment production for the BBT Tulfes-Pfons construction lot, KATZENBERGER Fertigteilindustrie GmbH was operating at record-breaking capacity from 2015 to the beginning of 2019. Another construction lot, which would involve doubling the production area, is still being negotiated. Meanwhile, production for a tunnel project in Switzerland will start in autumn 2020.



New Record Heights: With the construction of the fish ladder at the Annabrücke power plant, VERBUND Hydro Power GmbH sets a new milestone with the revolutionary Fishpass system.

ENATURE® FISHPASS: EUROPEAN RECORD WITH HIGHS AND LOWS

With over 50 installations and a one-of-a-kind concept developed at the Vienna University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, MABA's enature® Fishpass systems are a success that has made waves all over the country. The latest installation at the Drau power plant Annabrücke is once again breaking the Europe-wide height record for man-made fish ladders. Full customer satisfaction, however, could only be established at the second attempt ...



THE UNCONVENTIONAL RESEARCHER TURNS THE RECOGNIZED TEACHING OPINION UPSIDE DOWN

Growing up in Krems an der Donau and with a corresponding enthusiasm (and training) for cultural technology and water management, **Univ.-Prof. DI Dr. Helmut Mader** was interested in hydraulic engineering as early as the 1980s.

The inventor and "scientific father" of the MABA Fishpass system not only dealt with the turbulence introduced by "roughness", but also had to swim against the tide of recognized scientific doctrine in his field for years. Taking up a historic line of research ("Flow in rough conduits", Morris HM, 1955) he was able to demonstrate 65 years later how the introduction of artificially created roughness on the walls of the fish pass can be used to achieve optimal performance. Despite all critics, his unique invention has worked magnificently ever since.

2020 would have been a special year for Univ.-Prof. DI Dr. Helmut Mader and the enature® Fishpass system, co-developed, patented and produced by MABA Fertigteilindustrie GmbH: 10 years after the first prototypes were built, over 50 installations of the technical organism migration system, which has proven revolutionary in ecological and economic terms, have already been delivered and implemented.

With the opening of the latest fish ladder at the Annabrücke power plant on the Carinthian Drau, another milestone has been achieved: With a height of fall of 26 meters, which fish and other river dwellers migrate across from the entrance at the underwater area of the power plant up to the storage area, it is another impressive demonstration of what should theoretically be impossible - namely that water organisms actually migrate, crawl and swim over incredible distances and through hundreds of pools along mineral concrete walls. In large numbers and with little effort. And on top of that with a dramatically reduced energy consumption on the part of the power plant operator. A feat that, so far, no other system can even come anywhere close to achieving.

This record-setting fluidic and ecological masterpiece has been conceived, developed, and realized through years of collaboration between an unconventional professor, a courageous and enthusiastic project manager, and Austria's leading precast manufacturer with an insatiable thirst for innovation ...

A professor swims against the current

Since his habilitation on "near-natural hydraulic engineering" and through his research and teaching activities at the Vienna University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Helmut Mader has been working at the interface between ecology and hydropower for decades. But unlike many of his colleagues, who mainly come from the angle of hydrobiology and adhere to the common doctrine of "clean hydraulics" - that is, to let the water flow as free from losses and turbulence as possible - Helmut Mader has always been curious and unconventional enough to use a somewhat "unclean" approach in trying to square the circle. The hydraulic engineering expert explains: "The general problem with fish ladders is that the power plant operators groan about the considerable water loss, while the ecologists, on the other hand, are very unhappy about the effort required by the fish to overcome the great differences in height. In the past, there has never been a really good system that everyone was happy with!"

So, thought the professor, why not just slow the water down really brutally and provide a comfortable and gradual ascent through a series of calm pools, thus making the journey as palatable and agreeable for the fish as possible - through dozens or, in the case of larger systems, hundreds of staggered slots: turning to the left, then to the right, followed by a quiet pool, then another bend and so on and so forth. It is not known whether Helmut Mader could actually imagine that even the

weakest swimming fish and other more or less crawling river dwellers would one day cover almost a kilometer on this varied course and in the process overcome almost 30 meters in altitude. But he always wanted to try it. Because reduced flow speed also means reduced water consumption - and thus more energy yield for the hydropower plant, while at the same time demanding less effort from the fish.

Precast manufacturer with a thirst for research

Therefore, in 2008, he finally started looking for a research partner from the private sector. After the most obvious and logical partner gave him a rejection for this new scientific territory, an interesting contact arose through one of his graduate students, Dipl.-Ing. Michael Tauber, who was just hired by the MABA Fertigteilindustrie GmbH in Wöllersdorf and who would later be responsible for the joint project, under the direction of Kirchdorfer Group's R&D manager Dipl.-Ing. Alexander Barnaš.

The timing was good too: After developing many successful DELTABLOC® patents, the giant prefabricated parts manufacturer was open to exploring further potentially patentable innovations. The area of ecology was a topical issue anyway, and the fact that power plant operators would in the future be required to install organism migration systems as mandated by an EU directive did the rest. So, the company management decided to entrust their own research department

PERSISTENT ADVOCATE FOR THE SUCCESS OF AN INGENUOUS SYSTEM

As a congenial fellow campaigner and proponent of the MABA enature® Fishpass system, **DI (HTL) Sabine Käfer** has consistently and persistently campaigned for the success of the multiple-slot system – not least within her own company.

In the field of video-supported fish monitoring, the trained civil engineer is now continuously expanding the state of research together with Helmut Mader, in a pioneering role across Europe that is revolutionizing the whole topic in the long term. She also withstands repeated attempts to poach her from abroad - after 35 years she not only wants to remain loyal to her company but also to the aquatic ecology of her homeland in Carinthia.



with a revolutionary precast fish pass system and to release funds for the corresponding university research collaborations.

During two years of intensive research, professor Mader's approach then developed into serious performance art. He recalls the initial research activities: "In addition to a 1:5 model made of Plexiglas, in which we could observe the water flows very well, we also had a 20-meter long and 3-meter wide model built on a scale of 1: 1 in our large test hall, made out of formwork panels. We then rebuilt the whole thing about 40 times to examine all kinds of variations of slot sizes, inclinations, widths, and shapes – with several thousand measuring points per basin. Ultimately, we managed to reduce the water flow by a third compared to conventional single-slot systems, and that with 40% less turbulence."

The "multiple slot" system was born, and it worked! Nonetheless, the colleagues were not very enthusiastic: "Mader is apparently working on a fish pass without water" was one of the comments that occasionally could be heard. Of course, it took years before experts' opinions turned positive - and some spectacularly large and functional systems first had to prove themselves in practice before the critics finally fell silent. The fact that the "multiple slot" system got this far at all is due in no small part to the personal commitment of a "fish-loving" civil engineer from the ranks of the VERBUND company, which operates around 100 hydropower plants in Austria.

Love at first sight

When Sabine Käfer - responsible for the installation of fish ladders at VERBUND Hydropower GmbH in Carinthia - heard about the first larger enature® Fishpass test system in 2010, which was at that time just being installed in the Upper Austrian Hausruck district by MABA Fertigteilindustrie GmbH, she immediately arranged a meeting with Helmut Mader. She remembers her first encounter with the "professor whose title is longer than his name": "When I was there at the agreed time, there was no trace of the professor I was looking for. So I asked a man who stomped around down in the river, up to his waist in the water: Where can I find Professor Mader? With a big smile, the answer came immediately: Found him!"

The rest was, so to speak, history: The immediate enthusiasm for the system was followed by a long partnership in matters of fish migration systems and fish monitoring, which has continued to this day with numerous projects and joint publications. Sabine Käfer was the first client who dared to use the new system with a large reference installation in Rottau an der Möll and ultimately enabled the MABA Fishpass to achieve an impressive breakthrough in practice.

But before the first major order could be awarded, it was still necessary to prove and document the successful migration of the correspondingly large "key fish species". To do this, it was necessary to send a couple of impressive specimens of the required size through the pilot facility in Upper Austria ...

Showdown at river Ager

In the Hart power plant of KWG on the river Ager, whose weir has been in operation since 1924, a medium-sized fish pass system had just been installed, on which Helmut Mader and his graduate students carried out the first video-based fish monitoring. To the great delight of the research team, the new fish pass was used immediately and without further ado by the local fish population. Hundreds of fish swam through the facility in no time and with great ease. Now it was only a matter of successfully documenting a couple of large fish, such as several 1 m huchen (Danube salmon) and a 1.36 meter long catfish, for whose broad head the slit width was precisely measured, during their migration. So, Sabine Käfer let her contacts with the Carinthian fishermen play and organized a fish transport under veterinary supervision. For this, the Fishpass was cordoned off with grids and nets so that the guests from the Carinthian Drau could be studied accordingly.

With great gusto, the huchen shot straight through the many pools up to the top. Only the catfish was a bit shy at first and just wanted to chill in the quiet relaxation pool near the start line. After a few attempts, however, everything went smoothly, and the cameras were able to document the functionality of the system even for the largest key fish species.

But then, two of the huchen were suddenly no longer to be found a few days later ... apparently they had jumped through a small slit in the net over the installed grid into the Ager river, and thus jumped into freedom. Accord-

ing to the expert that had to be consulted, the damage incurred was EUR 7,000 per fish!

Nevertheless, after the successful tests, nothing stood in the way of a commission for the VERBUND power plant in Rottau an der Möll, and the first large installation was opened there some three years later, on October 4th, 2013. With over 100 pools and a total of 11 resting and spawning zones over a length of 435 meters and a height difference of 15.5 meters to be overcome, the fish pass in the Carinthian Mölltal demonstrated what had previously not been thought possible. After that, further projects followed in rapid succession and the respective heights of fall quickly rose far beyond the previously almost unimaginable 20-meter mark ...

Record hunt on the Drava

The Drau (Drava) river, which flows from its source in the South Tyrolean Puster Valley through East Tyrol, Carinthia, and Slovenia, is almost predestined to house record-breaking power plants and hydraulic structures: with the width of a stately river, it also has the gradient of a wild mountain stream. As a result, VERBUND Hydro Power GmbH's 10 Drau power plants supply two-thirds of Carinthia's total electricity demand.

Due to the topography, there are also huge falling heights to be overcome between the upstream and downstream waters - a challenge for which the MABA Fishpass is perfectly suited.

Nowhere else is the paradigm shift initiated by Helmut Mader, Sabine Käfer, and the

MABA Fertigteileindustrie GmbH so clearly visible as in the huge systems at the Drau power plants in Rosegg, Lavamünd, Schwabeck and Edling, which were implemented almost on a yearly basis starting in 2013. Sabine Käfer, who is responsible for the installations in Carinthia, explains:

"Normally, a fish ascent which, according to the longstanding expert opinion, does not introduce a so-called attraction current of at least several cubic meters per second into the underwater of the river, near the weir, is not supposed to be noticed at all. In our experience, however, fish are extremely sensitive and curious at the slightest attraction. The current emanating from our fish pass installations is only a small fraction of what it is supposed to be, and the entrance is in many cases several hundred meters away from the power station dam. Nevertheless, practically all fish find their way into the fish pass immediately. It even goes so far that temperature differences of only a few tenths of a degree in the small endowment from the fish pass actually continue hundreds of meters into the river and are perceived by the fish."

Many still find it difficult to believe how well it all works and especially over what distances, both in length and in height. But hundreds of thousands of fish migrations recorded on video, cataloged and evaluated by an auto-adaptive software speak a clear language. So does the incredibly modest water and energy loss - reduced by up to 40% for the operators of the power plants.

Over the years, the conventional doctrine has now slowly been changing and the principle of the multi-slot system will even be included in a future edition of the official Austrian guidelines for the construction of fish ladders.

Surprise at the Annabrücke project

The surprise of the industry colleagues about the new reference installation at the Annabrücke power plant was therefore already limited this time around. With a height difference of 26.5 (!) meters, it will break the current record from last year's enature® Fishpass installation at the neighboring Edling power plant. But apart from the record-setting highlights, both the concrete technology and the execution also had to meet the strict quality control of Ms. Käfer:

"This time, the quality at first reading, unfortunately, did not meet the high standards that the MABA Fertigteileindustrie GmbH usually sets for itself and for which it is well known. The individual prefabricated parts were then, of course, reworked comprehensively so that the system not only appeals optically to the fish but also leaves the best possible impression on the viewer!", explains Sabine Käfer. Of course, there were no more additional expenses for the customer.

Naturally, it is about more than just aesthetics - the installation at the Annabrücke power plant is an important reference project for the future of an ingenious modular precast system. It will potentially trigger a revolution not only in Carinthia, but throughout Europe ...



Not thought possible: From the first test system to the first real-world installations, the success and functionality of the multi-slot system were repeatedly doubted. In practice, however, it works better and more economical than anything that has come before.

KCS ACQUIRES TRADITIONAL CONCRETE WORKS

WELCOME TO KIRCHDORFER GROUP

LUIKI Betonwerke Gesellschaft mbH has been part of Kirchdorfer Concrete Solutions since April. The Upper Styrian family business has made an excellent reputation far beyond the national borders with constructive civil engineering products, as well as with paving stones and many beautiful, commissioned works. Embedded in the Kirchdorfer group structure, a new age is now dawning in Leoben in terms of organization and, above all, IT.



"Just come by when you want ... I will be happy to take time for you." – Walter Feiler's invitation to visit and report on his company in Leoben couldn't have been more open and friendly. The sales manager of the Upper Styrian precast manufacturer is quite busy these days, but not very much out of the company premises: with the coronavirus lockdown behind him, Walter Feiler was just appointed site manager as part of the ongoing integration into Kirchdorfer Concrete Solutions during the summer months. As a result, he took on additional responsibility and partly entered uncharted territory, explains the civil engineering and precast veteran who has been with the company for 35 years.

Traditional company with first-class products

When the traditional family business, founded in 1947 in the difficult post-war years by Alois Luiki - a construction foreman who emigrated from Carinthia to Leoben - was suddenly up for sale, the Kirchdorfer Group decided to take over the company with 40 employees and 2 locations in hand: Especially in civil engineering - as a manufacturer of special products, as it were - LUIKI can significantly strengthen a previously underrepresented area in Kirchdorfer Concrete Solutions. LUIKI's wide product range perfectly complements the product portfolio of TIBA Austria, which is marketed successfully all over Austria. Therefore, it was decided to take over the LUIKI concrete works in 2020 in a joint venture with the Kärntner KANDUSSI group, which is also on board as a co-owner at TIBA.

TIBA and MABA managing director Christian Nageler is therefore delighted with the joint future prospects: "We are very grateful for this opportunity, not only in terms of the product portfolio and the existing know-how but also with regard to the strategically important location on the Pyhrn motorway, which crosses the Alps in a north-south direction. This means that with our Austria-wide portfolio we can continue to reduce transport routes and position ourselves in Upper Styria and Upper Austria with a corresponding regional base."



Sales Director Walter Feiler on his way to a paperless office ...

The 40 experienced LUIKI employees, who can now count on long-term job security, are also grateful for the sustainable future prospects. Especially since over the recent years, the interest in the concrete plant by the younger generation of the owner's family has slowly but surely declined and a logical successor for Konrad Raidl-Schütz, the long-time managing director and son-in-law of Luiki daughter Hermine Schütz, had not been in sight.

With the integration into Kirchdorfer Concrete Solutions, LUIKI is now not only part of Austria's leading supplier of precast elements but benefits from many strategic advantages and synergies. The traditional company is currently being upgraded with state-of-the-art IT systems and integrated into the KCS organizational structures. Since the summer, Walter Feiler has had two computer displays on his bulging desk - although his most important customer contacts are still on the phone, as we can see for ourselves on the subsequent walk through the production halls. The em-



Hands-on in Upper Styria: While the 40 employees at the Leoben location already produce the finest concrete products of their kind, there is currently no stone unturned in terms of organization and IT.

ployees we meet in the production halls are also in a good mood and visibly happy in their work environment."The atmosphere and solidarity among colleagues is very good, no question about it", Walter Feiler explains to us.

But the real pride comes into focus when he starts to talk of the many beautiful reference projects that LUIKI has been able to implement over the decades: especially with the smooth paving stones as well as with broken variants with a natural stone look, which you can find in over 30 variants in different material types and colors. Such a portfolio is truly unique in Austria, and with it, numerous main squares, pedestrian zones, and other representative areas across the whole country have been adorned.

The small but particularly fine highlight, however, is an elegant lectern made of black concrete, which was installed on the occasion of the Pope's visit to the basilica in Mariazell, including a popular altar and floor panels in anthracite. "Beautiful. As smooth as a baby's bottom!"- Like every talented salesman, Walter Feiler also knows how to describe product advantages rather graphically and precisely. No wonder he is such an accomplished salesperson.

In the future, things will probably be even better. That is, if his qualities as a sales professional of the old school are enhanced with the new, SAP-based cooperation and optimization options within KCS - a fact that he points out himself on the occasion: "The competition doesn't sleep either!"



With a traditional focus on civil engineering construction, LUIKI completes and complements the range of KCS standard products.



Christian Nageler

Chief Sales Officer

Kirchdorfer Concrete Solutions



Great atmosphere, great products: In the LUIKI production halls, one encounters good-humored employees who create attractive products - from structural civil engineering to elegant natural stones in different concrete mixes and colors.

SLIM BARRIER RESTRAINS 38t TRUCK



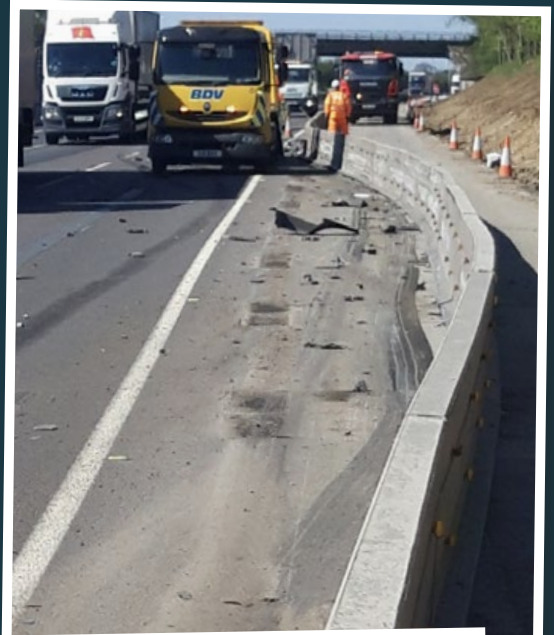
DAVID vs. GOLIATH

Everybody loves hero stories. Especially when „the little guy“ – armed with just a stick and a sling – defeats a giant in full armor and equipped with a deadly spear! Well, that biblical story is certainly almost as dramatic as a recent encounter between a „tiny little“ low temporary barrier and a 38-ton dump-truck at full speed. Luckily, nobody got hurt!

Call it a miracle or just plain engineering magic – either way, the whole incident looked rather astonishing to the observer: On her Majesty's famed M1 motorway over in the United Kingdom, an otherwise excellent German car suddenly broke down and had to stop alongside a chain of super slim and lightweight DELTABLOC® SB 70P temporary workzone protection barriers. Luckily for the two passengers, they could get out and rather easily climb to safety over the barriers – with a height of only 70 centimeters. This was a terribly good idea, because instants later a 38-ton truck hit the small Mercedes A-Class at full speed and subsequently crashed violently into the even smaller concrete barriers. What happened next was hard to believe, but not entirely miraculous: The chained SB 70P-barriers, which are tested and designed to withstand the impact of a regular 1.5-ton car, not only held together perfectly but also deflected the truck in a very controlled fashion, redirecting it back into the flow of traffic – just as you would hope for in a flawless crash test setting.

Kevin Wrigglesworth, who has been working at the DELTABLOC® U.K. subsidiary for over ten years, was just as delighted with the performance of the barrier as was „Highways England“, with whom DELTABLOC® had highlighted the need for this very same system only three years ago: "We set out to develop the lowest deflection system available on the U.K. market and also constantly made the case for reduced element height so that the barriers can be climbed over easily. The amazing performance of this system has now certainly earned us a great deal of respect."

So, to sum up the story: The SB 70P outperformed beyond it's duty, precious lives were saved, and after defeating Goliath, "little David", of course, went on to become the famed King of Israel. And DELTABLOC® technology, one might add, is once again proven „King of the Roads"!



Accident site (picture above): A small car stopped at the edge of the road. As the two passengers climbed over the construction site protection, the truck crashed into the car at full speed and then into the barrier. The passengers were unharmed behind the guidance system.



La grande étape

Conquering the French market as a foreign company is a bit like the famous Tour de France: perseverance is the name of the game - and you better be prepared for a few uphill and downhill rides. In the end, however, a grandiose finish beckons. The ever-young team of DELTABLOC France S.A.S. has mastered a large and important stage in an impressive way this year. More will follow. Even if a few years went by until the big breakthrough - DELTABLOC® is now at least as French as Bordeaux or Peugeot.

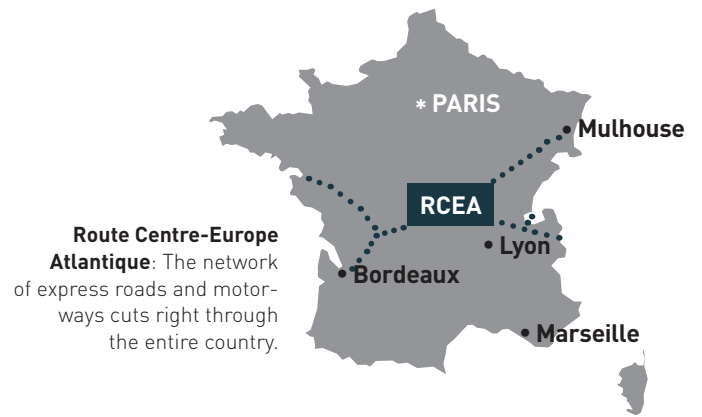
The international market success of DELTABLOC® is to a certain extent based on the famous Galileo principle: "Measure everything that can be measured - and make measurable that which is not yet measurable." Of course, you can only successfully measure and, above all, test, what is defined in the relevant safety standards. And in this respect the French market – and the initial lack of norms and standards – was a particularly great challenge.

Basic work for road safety

When the Austrian DELTABLOC® expert Reinhard Zahradnik was sent to the "Grande Nation" for the first time in 2008, the official set of standards and guidelines for restraint systems at the time was almost as poor as his lack of knowledge of French. But, of course, you can work on both - and so, with time and with a little patience, the first small successes soon arose: Similar safety norms, such as they had been established in Germany or the Scandinavian countries for a long time already, have since been gradually implemented in France as well. Accordingly, the business for DELTABLOC® slowly developed in the right direction. In particular, the rental business for securing motorway construction sites has been going well in recent years. So splendid in fact that the colleagues in Germany had to help out with appropriate product deliveries again and again. Nevertheless, the sustainable development of the French market under French leadership was anything but easy.

Business "à la française"

The matter with the missing guidelines was so delicate that Ingo Stoffels - Managing Director of the German branch and "foster father" of the French sister company - had to launch a "secret weapon" for the business on the other side of the Rhine in 2011: Antonieta Fernandes, a native of France with Portuguese roots, had previously worked in a law firm for 14 years. Concrete and construction sites were as remote from her professional interests as the tropics are for a polar bear. But coincidence and her spouse, who works at Neumarkt in the Upper Palatinate, ensured that she would be able to contribute charm, diplomatic skills, and above all her knowledge of the peculiarities of French business culture to the important committees and networks alongside Reinhard Zahradnik. Mrs. Fernandes was in a sense a godsend for DELTABLOC®,



because over the years she developed not only interest and passion for the subject, but also for the little successes that come with work à la française: one step forward, two steps back. In the end, it all paid off and DELTABLOC® was soon represented and respected in the most important committees. The big orders were then only a matter of time.

Breakthrough on the Route Centre-Europe Atlantique

After 10 years of basic development work, Cédric Otzenberger, a native of France, was recruited as National Sales Manager in 2018. The bilingual Alsatian with an English business degree came with the clear task of developing the French DELTABLOC® business sustainably for the future. And as soon as his first year was over, he and his team managed to land a major contract with some construction work along the so-called "RCEA", a network of roads that leads from Central Europe across the interior to the Atlantic coast: DELTABLOC France was commissioned to install a total of 65 (!) km of DB 80 elements along the A36 motorway section near the German border. The route there leads past the legendary Peugeot works near Mulhouse and on towards Bordeaux. With the successful implementation of this project, which is already in full swing, DELTABLOC France has finally become a respected French company that has permanently established itself as a highly professional provider. The "big development step" is now done, and the "Arc de Triomphe" is already visible in the distance!



Mountains of restraint elements are waiting for delivery to the construction site on the A36. The DELTABLOC France team has finally made the big breakthrough: (from left) consultant Olivier Keutgen, Martin Page, Antonieta Fernandes and Reinhard Zahradnik (joining the team online from Germany) as well as Philippe Roy and National Sales Manager Cédric Otzenberger.

ROAD SAFETY PIONEERS



First things first: DELTABLOC® installation to protect the workzone on the giant E4 Stockholm Bypass project.

SWEDEN JUST LOVES DELTABLOC®

When it comes to road safety, Sweden has always been a pioneering role-model. With road infrastructure designed for uncompromising safety, high penalties, and the Swedish „Vision Zero“ in terms of accident deaths legislated by parliament in 1997, Swedish roads are among the safest in the world. That's also why the Swedish Road Administration authorities discovered DELTABLOC® already more than 15 years ago and have absolutely loved it ever since.

Sweden has always been a very important market for Austrian-designed safety barriers, regardless of the fact that DELTABLOC® never actually set up a subsidiary company anywhere near. In fact, the Swedish Road Administration Authority first made contact with the road safety experts in Austria on their own as far back as 2005, before the international expansion strategy was even started. And ever since the newly-appointed DELTABLOC International CEO Thomas Edl travelled for a follow-up meeting and presentation to Gothenburg, contact has never stopped, nor has the expansion of business across this vast country in Scandinavia.



Patrik Ekberg: DELTABLOC® „Ambassador“ in Sweden for close to 15 years.

„When we first started to produce DELTABLOC® elements locally in Sweden, the concrete was hardly even dry when people were already lining up at the factory to get their

hands on them“, recounts Patrik Ekberg: With plenty of years and experience in the business, Ekberg has been developing the Swedish market in cooperation with DELTABLOC® ever since the very first contact was made. And he is just as passionate about the product nowadays as he was back when it all started. His main job over the years has been to bring all the different players together, develop, train, and certify local production partners, and help planners and authorities to design the very best use cases for the vast portfolio. As such, he is of course particularly proud of one of the most recent DELTABLOC® installations in the country: The giant Stockholm Bypass project, which will close one of the largest gaps in an otherwise world-class road network.

Delivering the perfect way around town

The Stockholm Bypass project will complete the „E4“ in a wide circle around the western outskirts of Stockholm. This is, after all, Europe's second-longest road – leading from Helsingborg in the south all the way up to the border with Finland. But in order to get through the capital, you have to leave the E4 and regularly get stuck in heavy traffic on the E20 ring road. The situation is so bad that Stockholmers are charged a special „congestion tax“ for this

section of road. Which fully explains the rather drastic measures taken to rectify the situation: Upon completion in 2026, more than a hundred thousand motorists per day will be taken for an elegant and uninterrupted ride across and under a number of bodies of water and islands – Stockholm is, for good reason, called the „Venice of the north“. Only vastly bigger, and fully car-friendly.

Apart from one of the world's longest tunnels (16.5 km), virtually all above-ground sections of the 21 km bypass road will feature state-of-the-art DELTABLOC® installations. What makes this project very special is the number of different components used: Apart from several kilometers worth of DB 80-series barriers, a whole showcase of gantries, transition elements, emergency openings, and lighting columns will be deployed. Patrik Ekberg explains: „The entire layout of the project has been designed in close cooperation with the expert technical support team at DELTABLOC International back in Sollenau. They just got the plans of the area and designed the perfect seamless safety system. No wonder why the Swedish Road Authorities absolutely love us now!“

Lots to love for DELTABLOC®

Speaking of „seamless safety“. The other big headache along the 1,590 km long E4 is also currently being addressed: The last remaining stretch of dangerous and accident-prone road near Ljungby is now also upgraded to motorway standard, with the help of more than a dozen kilometres of DELTABLOC® safety barriers.

But in Sweden, you don't even need to have a car in order to marvel at the beauty of Kirchdorfer Group's most iconic export brand: Even pedestrians and bicycle riders may now encounter the famed concrete barriers in the middle of the city – in perfect harmony with attached billboards and other accessories! Such innovative solutions are currently being tested thoroughly. Because rigorous testing is just what the Swedes do! At this point, readers of a certain age group will recall a rather respected Stuttgart carmaker's epic fail in the since-famed „Elk Test“. Speaking of safety standards, we just had to bring up the subject in the interview – and Patrik Ekberg happily confirmed: „It happens all the time, and elks are rather large and heavy objects to evade!“

Throughout Sweden, there is certainly no evading state-of-the-art safety barriers. They now come even made out of steel, and travellers



E4 Stockholm Bypass: The 3 bn USD project is one of the largest and most complex in the history of road construction in Sweden and will feature a 16.5-km tunnel, which goes under Mälaren lake at a depth of 100 metres.



DELTABLOC® everywhere: Nowadays, the omnipresent concrete barriers can even be admired in the middle of a pedestrian and bicycle zone. Including some elegant billboards attached.

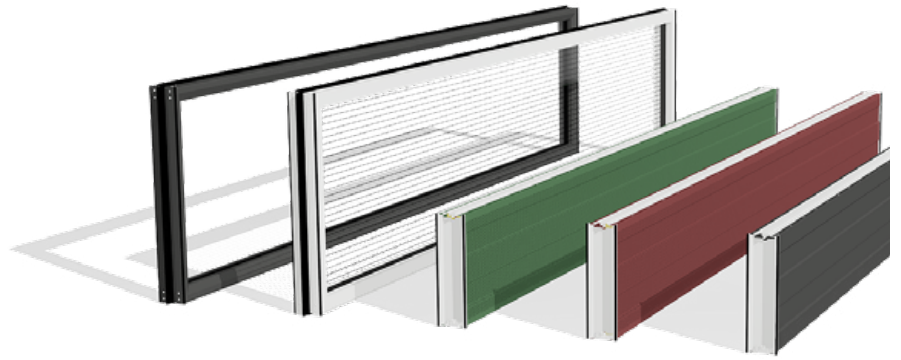
will encounter the work of Swedish pioneers even before entering the country. The first-ever STEELBLOC® installation, deployed in cooperation with „Nordic Road Safety“, on man-made and futuristic Danish soil ...



© Peberholm, STEELBLOC® and the Øresund Bridge

A SPECTACULAR STEELBLOC® PREMIERE

If you were to find the most unique location on the planet for the very first installation of the new STEELBLOC® system, you could hardly do better than Peberholm – the „pepper islet“ in the middle of the Øresund Strait. The perfectly „streamlined“ and 3-km long man-made island is a transition between the bridge and tunnel sections connecting Copenhagen and Malmö. It also serves as a heavily guarded scientific experiment: Only biologists are permitted to walk on the island once a year in order to study nature's newly settled species. Since 2020, the researchers can take a first look at **the new STEELBLOC® phenomenon** as well.



COMPLETE WITH ALUMINUM & ACRYLIC

From a groundbreaking pioneer, DELTABLOC® has developed more and more into the market-dominating full-service provider for "seamless road safety". Now the last gap has also been closed in the noise protection segment.

With integrated and crash-tested noise protection and restraint systems, the PHONOBLOC® series already has an excellent reputation in Austria and internationally and features an impressive portfolio with both mineral and wood-concrete panels. With increasing international success (and demand), it made sense to supplement the noise protection program with lightweight solutions made of aluminum.

Promising partnership of leading experts

Ralf Dirnberger, the head of the Noise Protection Competence Center of the Kirchdorfer Road & Traffic Division, was able to win the ideal production partner with the Salzburg-based ALUMERO Group. And Alexander Handlechner, an industry expert with a wealth of experience in marketing aluminum & acrylic panels, recently joined the growing PHONOBLOC® team. This means that the DELTABLOC® Group has now become a full-range supplier in noise protection - a strategy from which further growth in this dynamic segment is expected, especially on the German market. Because what counts there is a clever overall solution from a single source!

CONSTRUCTION START FOR NEW HOME OF ROAD SAFETY

The DELTABLOC International headquarters are the focal point when it comes to road safety. What is still missing is a functional and representative company headquarters, which not only does justice to the reputation, but also to the increasing demands.



Due to its dynamic growth, the Kirchdorfer Road & Traffic Division, which now has 140 employees, is already bursting at the seams at the long-serving company headquarters in Sollenau. With the construction of the new "Home of Road Safety" directly on the site of the Group's operational headquarters in Wöllersdorf, the ever-increasing space requirements will be satisfied by 2021 with an approx. 2,000 m² office complex. It will also perfectly meet the company's dynamic requirements: employees, customers and, last but not least, production partners passing by from all over the world will find a perfect work infrastructure - from the fully equipped and directly integrated "show production" to temporary workplaces for the many guests in the house.

Plug & Play workplaces

"Customers, partners, and colleagues from the subsidiaries come to attend training courses on a daily basis. In the new headquarters, they will find fully equipped workstations where they can work productively in next to no time", explains Division Head Thomas Edl. "But the most important thing is that our employees also feel comfortable in an attractive work environment!"

1884-1972

EGON HOFMANN: ARTIST, INDUSTRIALIST, COSMOPOLITAN

With Egon Hofmann, an important artistic personality was honored in the Linz City Museum Nordico.

The name Hofmann not only played an important role in the industrialization of Upper Austria but also in the art world in Linz. The grandfather of the current majority owner of the Kirchdorfer Group, Egon Hofmann, is responsible for this. From January to April 2020, the Linz City Museum Nordico devoted a large personal exhibition to his long and influential artistic work, in which his extensive oeuvre was presented in the context of the history of the city of Linz.

Egon Hofmann was not only an extraordinary artistic personality and a doyen of the Upper Austrian art scene, but also an ambitious alpinist, well-traveled adventurer, and, as an industrialist, an important member of bourgeois society in Linz.

Artist with role model function

The fact that Egon Hofmann was able to act as a mediator between so many different worlds in a long and eventful life is not least due to his biography and his sense of duty: as the son of a talented painter, he was naturally born with artistic genes, and he decided to become a painter at the age of 4.

With a law degree and a trial run in the family business, however, he also entered the family tradition on the father's side. It was only after his younger brother took over this role that he was able to pave the way for his own painting and artistic career by devoting more time to expeditions, trips around the world and sporting activities.

However, when his brother died unexpectedly in 1934, Egon Hofmann dutifully took over the family business at the age of 50, but at the same time remained an artist who not only dealt with his own work, but also looked after the next generation of artists.

The atelier he built for young artists in Linz's Dörfel still bears his name today. A name that has now been duly recalled to museum visitors in Linz.



Opening of the Egon Hofmann exhibition in the NORDICO City Museum in Linz: (from left to right)

Exhibition curator Michaela Nagal, granddaughter Eva Hofmann, CEO of the Kirchdorfer Group Erich Fromwald with city councillor for cultural affairs Doris Lang-Mayrhofer and museum director Andrea Bina.

KIRCHDORFER SHAREHOLDER PAUL BLÜMEL

70th BIRTHDAY ... WISHING MANY HAPPY RETURNS!

Despite all the turbulence that 2020 brought with it - there was nevertheless a good reason to celebrate among the shareholders of the Kirchdorfer Group: A member of the family that goes back to co-founder Emil Dierzer Ritter von Traunthal, our long-standing shareholder and supervisory board member **Paul Blümel** celebrated his 70th birthday this year.

Born in 1950, he graduated from high school, but dropped out of his future studies to join his father's electrical company as commercial manager, finally taking over business ownership in 1993.

Much earlier, namely in 1976, Paul Blümel already took over the shares in the Kirchdorfer Group from Elisabeth Blümel, a trained business graduate. At that time, Kirchdorfer Group essentially consisted only of the cement plant, an electric power plant, the Micheldorf spun concrete plant as well as an electrical installations company. Today he is all the more pleased to look back with a certain degree of pride and, above all, gratitude at the incredible expansion of the group over the past decades: "The many successful acquisitions are, of course, primarily due to the shareholders' generous willingness to invest and foresight and, not least, the capable and longstanding managing directors", the jubilee is convinced. We wish him all the best and, above all, good health for his old age!



Visit to the LUIKI concrete works in Leoben: **Paul Blümel** (1st from right) with the other Kirchdorfer shareholders.



WE LOOK FORWARD TO **YOUR**
FEEDBACK ON THIS ISSUE OF KN:

KirchdorferNews@kirchdorfer.eu



KIRCHDORFER
GROUP

MEDIA HOLDER AND PUBLISHER Kirchdorfer Industries GmbH, Hofmannstraße 4, A-4560 Kirchdorf · **PHONE** +43 5 7715 100 0 · **MAIL** welcome@kirchdorfer.eu, www.kirchdorfer.eu · **EDITORIAL BOARD** Kirchdorfer Gruppe · **CONTACT** Marlene Mies, MA · **PHONE** +43 5 7715 101 123 · **MAIL** marlene.mies@kirchdorfer.eu · **TEXT & DESIGN** Dr. Christoph Rieger, A-8141 Premstätten · **FOTOS** as labeled on the pictures, otherwise: Archiv Kirchdorfer Gruppe · **COVER** Dr. Christoph Rieger, October 2020. Errors and printing errors excepted. All rights reserved, including the adoption of contributions according to the Austrian Copyright Law [§ 44 par. 1 and 2 Copyright Protection Act].