

Always a step ahead

Custom-built machine manufacturer groninger continues to grow in 2014

You do not become a leading international machine builder in today's market for nothing. You have to offer your customers something very special. 35 years after its founding, groninger's machines and production lines continue to be a benchmark in the pharmaceutical and cosmetics industries. With around 770 employees in Crailsheim and 200 in Schnelldorf, groninger's success is still based on factors such as wide-ranging expertise, wise investments, farsighted decisions and supporting services.

The figures look good: revenues of 130 million euros (2013: 115 million euros) up 13% on the year before and 26% more revenue in the after sales service division. groninger believes in the human factor as the key to success: the company philosophy is underpinned by the view that everything employees do contributes to the company's development. "Highly qualified motivated employees are the linchpin in consolidating and expanding our success in the market. As Managing Director Jens Groninger comments: "Every small detail contributes to the company's development,". And employees reaped the rewards a few weeks ago when they enjoyed a bonus from a dividend totaling 2.5 million euros. Jens Groninger: "We are a robust family-run company. A high degree of security and steady growth are just two of the many factors that make us an attractive employer." groninger employs 1,000 people worldwide in Germany and the USA (in Charlotte, North Carolina).

Reinvestment in research and development

Business is brisk, order books brimming. Production is running at full steam ahead with more than 50 pharmaceutical and more than 30 cosmetics projects. True to character, groninger is not content with resting on its laurels. Far from it: it continuously monitors and analyzes industrial developments, internal processes and market situations, thus ensuring that it can always attract customers with winning ideas. One of these is the Business Line. This new machine concept, based on a ready-engineered philosophy for cosmetics manufacturers, impresses customers with a host of benefits including short lead times. Actions speak louder than words, so apart from emphasizing its cutting-edge technology as part of its corporate identity it also reinvests 10% of annual sales revenue in research and development.

Worldwide projects 2014

In 2014 groninger continued to work with European, American and Asian companies and well-known brands. One example: groninger built a syringe filling line for a major Austrian generics

manufacturer using an in-house developed and patented segment conveyor system. It guarantees 100% in-process control at full output, a world first in this market.

Record revenues in after-sales service

The after sales service division is a promising source of revenue. Up 26% compared to the year before, record sales of around 31 million euros were reported at all three company sites. The "one face to the customer" principle, fluency in the customer's language, and customer-specific documentation for the supplied systems have been standard practice at groninger for many years. Advanced remote services, training and maintenance for production software and hardware are part of the comprehensive range of services offered by groninger. The entire after sales service division has been centralized in a building of its own. The division is well-staffed with around 100 employees. This means that approximately 10% of all employees attend to customers' needs. The field force is seeking support, particularly from service engineers on the front line – the company is always keen to recruit personnel with good credentials.

Milestones in 2015

The North American headquarters are also flourishing. Until now Charlotte has simply been a service outpost for supplying spare parts, overhauling and refitting machines and supporting customers during commissioning and production. These tasks are becoming more important as groninger USA goes from strength to strength. Another milestone in the company's history: in 2015 Charlotte will design, manufacture and assemble its first own machine series.

Crailsheim and Schnelldorf are also forging ahead. Crailsheim is to have its own company restaurant, due to open in May 2015. Employees will then be able to purchase freshly prepared meals every day. Great importance is attached to the use of local and healthy ingredients. In Schnelldorf the company is building a new assembly building with offices. Major investments continue to be allocated to training at all sites. Recruits for electrical trades are in particularly high demand.

groninger: social and progressive

groninger has established a family office to help employees improve their work life balance and sources temporary childcare. The company also contributes towards childcare with external facilities for children from the age of three months to three years (for example in a daycare center).

groninger has always cultivated its presence at recruitment fairs to attract young people and give them an insight into the special aspects of the machine builder. However, in July 2014 groninger went one step further: more than 500 people came to the first apprentice information event to find out more about apprenticeship trades and dual work-study programs. Under the banner of "Fill

your Vision with Life" technicians and trainees provided information in a relaxed atmosphere. Parents and young people could find out more details at several info points in the new training center. The information event will be an annual event in the future. July 25 has already been marked in for this year.

Faster, better, further.

"2014 was a year of change. We examined and optimized many internal processes so that in future customers can look forward to faster delivery and greater efficiency. Our lead times will be shorter," promises Jens Groninger.

Faster, better, further: the Crailsheim builder of custom-made machines has ambitious goals for the upcoming years and is best equipped to achieve them.

About groninger

Products: custom-built machines for the pharmaceutical and cosmetics industry

Sites: Crailsheim, Schnelldorf, Charlotte (USA)

Offices: around the globe in more than 35 countries

Established: 1980 by Eva and Horst Groninger

Management: Jens Groninger in Crailsheim, Volker Groninger in Schnelldorf, Horst and Eva Groninger on the holding advisory board

Employees: worldwide 1,000

Revenue: 130 million euros

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