

dialog

Autumn 2024 issue



People
Machines
Possibilities

EMW

Strategies for successful market cultivation

Perforated Metal

Bionics in vehicle construction

Container Systems

Digital heating control system for stainless steel IBC

IT-Systems

Edge data centre for hospitals



EMW Steel Service Centre

- 4 Strategies for successful market cultivation
- 6 Expansion of the international sales structure
- 7 LESS – new labelling for CO₂-reduced steel



SCHÄFER Perforated Metal

- 8 Alpine safety and aesthetics at the Limmern reservoir
- 10 Bionics in vehicle construction



SCHÄFER Container Systems

- 12 Sustainability in the beverage industry
- 12 SKA: Advancing sustainability in Europe with stainless steel KEGs
- 13 Strengthened market presence in Southern Europe and Africa
- 13 New contact at SCHÄFER SUDEX
- 14 IBC heating containers as part of the fourth industrial revolution

SCHÄFER IT-Systems

- 16 Micro data centres in clinical data operations
- 17 SCHÄFER IT-Systems is expanding across Europe
- 18 Data Center Group and SCHÄFER IT-Systems at DCW

SCHÄFER Office and Operating Equipment

- 19 Efficiency and economy in the working environment

About us

- 20 AI on the rise
- 21 Management workshop 2024: Focus on strategies
- 21 Examinations successfully passed
- 22 Sustainability in the SCHÄFER WERKE Group



Management Board of SCHÄFER WERKE Group: Michael Mockenhaupt, Guido Klinkhammer and Marcus Düber

People – Machines – Possibilities

Dear readers,

Mastering economically challenging times together, with people, machines and possibilities as the basis for tomorrow's success – that is the overarching theme of this issue of our customer magazine. In times that present us all with new challenges, the SCHÄFER WERKE Group is looking to the future with confidence. Our company relies on a strong combination of state-of-the-art technology, committed people and diverse opportunities to continue to be successful and grow sustainably.

In this magazine, we show you how we are strategically positioning ourselves for the future with various projects, solutions and announcements: With innovations, targeted investments in machinery and a clear focus on the further development of our employees. All of this is the basis for utilising new opportunities, uncovering potential and remaining successful as a company even in uncertain times. People are always at the centre of our efforts – from their vocational training to the integration of advanced technologies such as artificial intelligence, which will permanently change our working world.

With people, machines and possibilities, we are optimistic about the future despite the challenges of our time. Together we create the basis for long-term success – for the SCHÄFER WERKE Group, our employees and our customers.

We would be delighted if you found inspiring ideas for your own work in this issue of dialog.

The Management Board

Michael Mockenhaupt

Guido Klinkhammer

Marcus Düber

Trade Fairs and Dates



Alles für den Gast

Trade Fair for Gastronomy and Hotels
9–13 November 2024
Salzburg, Austria



BBTech expo

Beer & Beverage Technologies Show
16–18 February 2025
Rimini, Italy



BRAU BEVIALE

Trade Fair for the Beverage Industry
26–28 November 2024
Nuremberg, Germany



BeerX

Beer and Brewery Event
19–20 March 2025
Liverpool, United Kingdom



Winzer-Service Messe

Trade Fair for Viticulture, Cellaring, etc.
5–7 February 2025
Karlsruhe, Germany



Craft Brewers Conference & BrewExpo America

28 April – 1 May 2025
Indianapolis, USA

COMPANY DETAILS

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Strategies for successful market cultivation

Joint EMW and OKS sales conference

What trends and challenges are currently characterising the steel markets? What strategies can the EMW Steel Service Centre use to operate successfully in this environment? These questions were the focus of the second joint EMW and OKS sales conference, which took place in Hachenburg on 19th June. OKS Otto Knauf GmbH is a modern steel service centre with high-performance slitting lines that processes several hundred thousand tonnes of steel every year. The company was acquired by SCHÄFER Werke GmbH & Co KG.



Lively dialogue in a relaxed atmosphere in Hachenburg

Exchange of experience and future prospects

The all-day event focused on an intensive professional exchange and setting the course for the coming years. Michael Mockenhaupt, CEO of the EMW Steel Service Centre, began by presenting the company's strategy up to 2027 as well as the associated goals and activities.

The reports from field service employees took centre stage. Under the motto "Learning from each other, benefiting from experience and expertise", current developments from the various regions, trends and specific practical examples were presented. The insights into market activity stimulated constructive discussions.

Successful expansion of the range of solutions

Outstanding product quality incorporating the latest technologies and close cooperation with business partners have been the basis of SCHÄFER Werke GmbH & Co KG's success since its foundation.



The sales teams of the EMW Steel Service Centre and Otto Knauf GmbH

Thanks to the cooperation with OKS, the existing product range has been significantly expanded. This applies not only to the new range of thicknesses, but also to the range of grades. Otto Knauf GmbH has an extensive range of machinery and a skilled and experienced workforce. Their systems can process steels with a thickness of 0.25 to 16 mm. In addition to carbon steels, stainless steel and aluminium are also split in production.

The additional storage capacity is of great benefit to EMW – the coil warehouse has a capacity of 60,000 tonnes, while the finished material warehouse can hold up to 15,000 tonnes of slit strips.

For the joint EMW and OKS sales team, the task now is to successfully implement the plans and strategies that have been developed.

A passion for steel service

Areas of expertise and solutions



Products

Coils, slit strip, blanks, circular blanks, perforated sheets

Grades

Cold-rolled, hot-rolled, hot-dip galvanised, electrolytically galvanised
Standard, deep-drawing, micro-alloyed, high-strength and ultra-high-strength grades
Perforated sheets (various materials such as aluminium, steel, stainless steel, etc.)

"Green Steel"

Steel with reduced carbon emissions in production

Material dimensions – coils/slit strip

Thicknesses 0.25–16 mm
Widths 18–1850 mm

Material dimensions – cut to size

Thicknesses 0.4–3.0 mm
Widths up to 1850 mm
Lengths up to 4500 mm

Target customers



Automotive industry

Manufacturers
Suppliers

Commercial vehicle industry

Manufacturers
Suppliers

Industry

Construction industry
Electrical industry
Mechanical engineering
Profile manufacturer
Pipe manufacturer
Cabinet and housing manufacturer
Solar industry
White goods

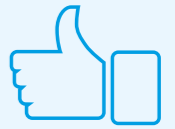
Coil trading

Direct processors

Contract splitting

Aluminium and stainless steel

Advantages



Worldwide and factory-independent procurement

Stock of input material of more than 300,000 t

Temperature-controlled area of 85,000 m²

Production volume of more than 1,300,000 tonnes per year

State-of-the-art production facilities

11 slitting lines
4 cut-to-length lines
2 Amada cutting centres
1 roll stand

Quality guarantee and process reliability

Three locations

Neunkirchen, North Rhine-Westphalia
Iserlohn, North Rhine-Westphalia
(OKS Otto Knauf) Treuen, Saxony



Expansion of the international sales structure

Expansions in Poland, the Czech Republic, Benelux and France



Michał Ulman in his newly opened office in Poland

EMW Stahl Service GmbH is pleased to be able to further expand its sales structures. The development includes the opening of new offices and expansion of the international team. We are thus taking an important step towards strengthening our company in these important regions.

Poland: Michał Ulman opens a sales office with new colleague Łukasz Merski

With the opening of our new sales office in one of our strongest export markets, we are systematically expanding our sales activities in Poland. Our long-standing employee Michał Ulman will also receive additional support from our new colleague Łukasz Merski, whom we warmly welcome to EMW Stahl Service GmbH. With the new office and staff support, we can now respond even better to the needs of our customers in Poland and provide them with even more comprehensive and direct support.

Czech Republic: New representative Miroslav Kotrč

We are also strengthening our team in the Czech Republic and are delighted to welcome Miroslav Kotrč as a new sales representative. He brings with him extensive experience from the international automotive supply industry, which he will bring to EMW Stahl Service GmbH for the benefit of our customers. Miroslav Kotrč is also active on the sales side for the SCHÄFER Perforated Metal business unit, which he knows well from ear-

lier times. His work in the Czech Republic enables more intensive and effective customer support on site. At the same time, we can strengthen our competitiveness in the region.

Strengthening the market position through targeted measures

With this targeted expansion in Poland, the Czech Republic and other European regions, we are continuing our strategy of continuously expanding the sales structure of EMW Stahl Service GmbH. By opening new offices and expanding the team, we can consolidate our market position and further improve our customer service. We look forward to a successful collaboration with our new representatives and to the opportunities we have together in the future.



Miroslav Kotrč as representative for the Czech Republic



Appie Bogers is the contact person for Benelux and France

Expansion in Benelux and France

In addition to the new branch offices in Poland and the Czech Republic, there is another change in our neighbouring countries. Appie Bogers has been responsible for Benelux and France as of this year. He also has decades of experience in the steel industry and will use his expertise and broad network in the industry to further promote EMW Stahl Service GmbH in these regions. This underlines our ongoing efforts to optimise our sales structure and intensify our presence.

LESS – new labelling for CO₂-reduced steel

For greater transparency and standardisation

The new “Low Emission Steel Standard” (LESS) labelling system was presented at the last HANNOVER MESSE together with the German Steel Federation and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Protection. This system aims to establish a generally recognised standard for CO₂-reduced steel in the steel industry and thus pave the way for green lead markets. A transparent labelling system will make it easier for manufacturers and customers to better understand and evaluate the carbon footprint of steel products in future.

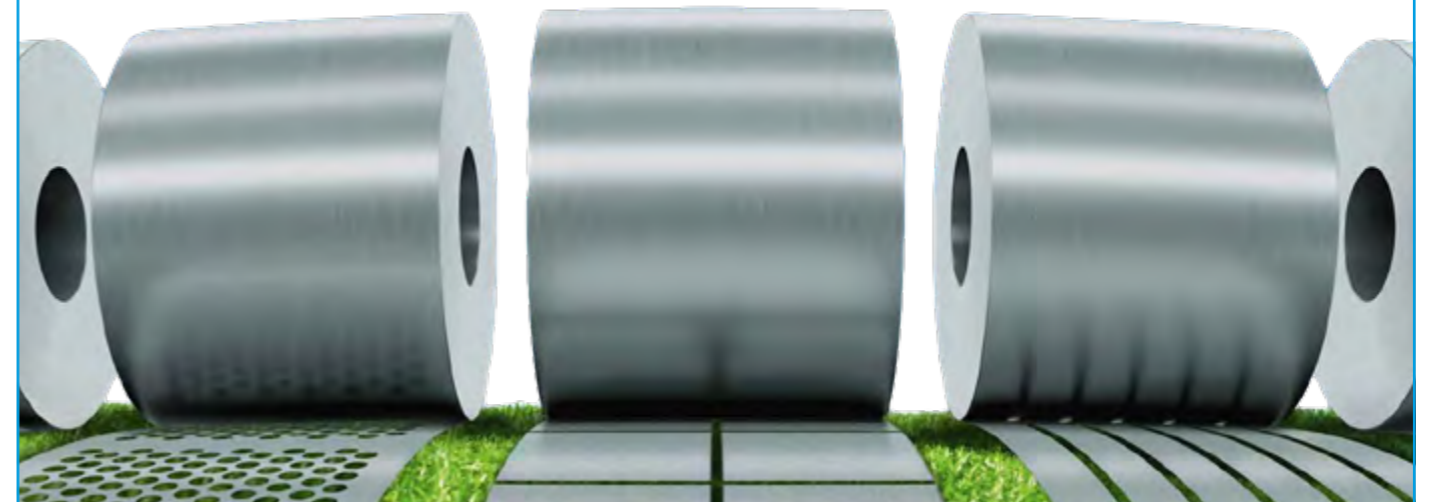
Achieving sustainability goals with a system

The need to reduce the ecological footprint of steel production is undisputed. As one of the largest plant-independent

steel service centres, we also see it as our responsibility to actively and resolutely drive forward the transition to climate neutrality.

In order to achieve our own goals and those of our customers in the area of CO₂ reduction, we have already entered into numerous agreements on the supply of CO₂-reduced steel with almost all major steel suppliers in Europe in recent years. The new LESS labelling system will help us to ensure uniform documentation, tracking and dissemination of the carbon footprint.

We therefore welcome the introduction of a standardised labelling system and support the development to improve the comparability and assessability of climate-friendly steel.



Alpine safety and aesthetics with perforated sheets

Perforated sheet elements make the Limmern dam wall – at an altitude of 1860 metres above sea level – safe to walk on and while also improving the view

In 1963, the Limmern arch dam, with a height of 146 metres, was completed in the Swiss canton of Glarus. It dams Limmernsee lake, which forms the core of the power plant facility at Limmernsee. The operator is Kraftwerke Linth-Limmern AG (KLL). In the course of the renovation of the dam, 674 metres of special railings made of perforated sheets from SCHÄFER Perforated Metal were installed on the dam wall for permanent terrain stabilisation.

The original fall protection consisted of tubular railing that no longer met today's safety requirements for a place accessible to the public: Children could climb up or even climb through. In addition, the prescribed minimum height of 1.10 metres was not met. For this reason, REECH AG, the Swiss full-service provider for photovoltaic systems, storage systems and electric charging stations, was commissioned by KLL to plan and implement a standard-compliant fall protection system.

"When designing the fall protection, various design variants were evaluated, calculated and visualised. The perforated sheet variant was preferred to the alternative wire mesh solution because it meant that a more attractive appearance could be achieved at a manageable additional cost and, in addition, significantly less installation work was to be expected on-site," explains Tamás Szacsny, Managing Partner at REECH AG, responsible for design and planning.

Sustainable renovation and customised installation

The existing posts and crossbars made of hot-dip galvanised steel could be refurbished on both the lake and valley sides

in order to firmly anchor the individual perforated sheet elements to them. This solution variant has received the most support in advance as a sustainable and cost-effective measure.

First of all, KLL used outturn samples to check on-site whether the desired result was achieved, especially at points with different radii of curvature of the wall. The perforated sheet elements (perforation RV 20-30) could then be produced to size, edged and packaged by SCHÄFER Perforated Metal.

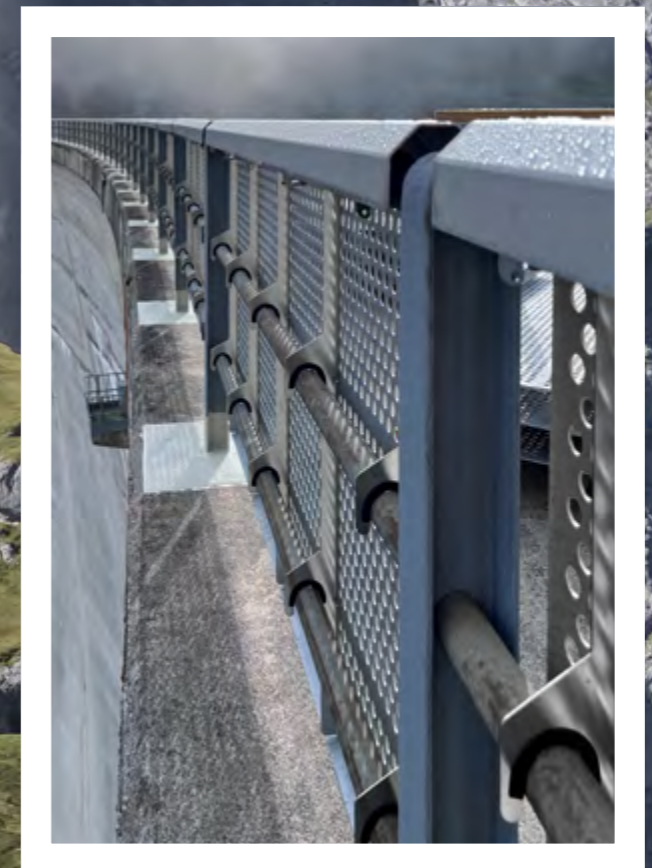
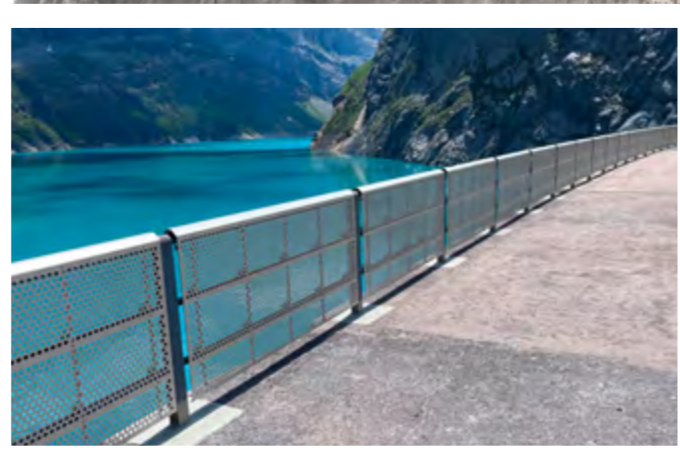
"Due to the high alpine location and the requirements for corrosion protection, the manufactured individual elements are made of factory pre-anodised three millimetre thick aluminium sheet with a double layer thickness of 20 micrometres," says Eric Diehl, project manager in technical sales at SCHÄFER Perforated Metal.

Durable material for high alpine requirements

The reinforced anodising process provides the surface of the aluminium with a protective oxide layer that protects it from corrosion. This increases the durability and service life of the aluminium perforated sheets, especially in environments with high humidity or aggressive chemicals.

"We have been searching for a long time for a suitable material that can permanently withstand the harsh conditions in winter during storms and rain. For this reason, we decided to use perforated sheets. So far we have only received positive feedback," says Peter Schindler, Technical Assistant Mechanics at Kraftwerke Linth-Limmern AG.

Under the motto "Perforated sheets made to measure – from standard to customised", SCHÄFER Perforated Metal offers a wide range of high-quality perforated sheets for all industries and an extremely wide range of areas of application, with immediate availability.



Perforated sheets hold up permanently even under harsh conditions in winter storms and rain: Lake-side and valley-side fall protection with durable perforated sheets on the Limmern dam wall from SCHÄFER Perforated Metal.



Read the whole article here.

Bionics in vehicle construction with perforated sheets

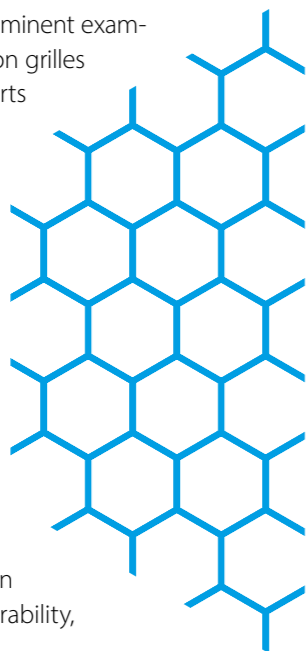
Perforated sheets are indispensable in vehicle and mechanical engineering



INEOS Grenadier with visible protective and ventilation grilles on the front of the vehicle

Perforated sheets are a proven construction and design element with a wide range of functions in the automotive and commercial vehicle industry. Prominent examples include protective and ventilation grilles on engines, perforated body parts to optimise the weight of off-road vehicles and construction machinery, loading areas for vans and tow trucks and engine housings for tractors.

The perforated sheet itself is not complicated – it is simply a metal sheet with punched-out openings. When it comes to the finer details, however, precise and customised solutions are required in order to implement the advantages of perforated sheet metal in practice – including functionality, durability, stability and lightness.



SCHÄFER perforated sheets are used in particular for commercial vehicles, such as construction and agricultural machinery, which have to function in corrosive conditions with exposure to chemicals, moisture, dirt and mechanical influences. A prominent example is the Grenadier off-road vehicle from INEOS Automotive.

With an open area of up to **85% hexagonal perforations** achieve significantly improved cooling.

Nine individual protective and ventilation grilles are visibly located at the front of the vehicle and are optimised for air flow to cool the engine. In addition, they provide permanent protection of the engine against the mechanical impacts that are common in everyday off-road use. The grilles are manufactured in Neunkirchen in North Rhine-Westphalia and delivered ready for installation.

Bionics – biology and technology in a perforated sheet

Each hole type has specific areas of application and offers individual advantages. A diamond-shaped perforation allows a free cross-section of just under 75%. One square metre of perforated sheet then consists of 25% metal and 75% open surface, which explains the enormous weight reduction. This optimises air permeability, increases rigidity and provides protection against mechanical impact from objects with a diameter greater than 6 mm.

“The original plan for the INEOS Grenadier was a diamond-shaped perforation for the engine guard. During the design-in process, however, we worked with the engineers and designers at INEOS to identify the advantages of hexagonal perforation for this application. The increase in air flow achieved of a good 8% has a measurable effect on engine cooling. As a result, the engine works more efficiently and is just as well protected against stone chipping as with the diamond perforation,” explains Torsten Schoew, automotive expert in the field of engine protection and cooling at SCHÄFER Perforated Metal.

The challenge in producing the hole pattern is the ratio of hole size (6 mm), material thickness (1.0 mm) and web width (0.7 mm). The 0.7 mm thin webbing must not tear during production and must be able to withstand external influences even in harsh environments. This requires expertise and precise punching tools, which SCHÄFER Perforated Metal manufactures in its in-house tool shop.

Manufacturing expertise and finishing for durability

In the production of perforated sheets, metal punches are pressed into the smooth sheet surface by machine, creating the specific hole patterns. Process-related burrs occur on the punch exit sides on the underside of the sheet. At SCHÄFER Perforated Metal, these are deburred as standard in an additional work step during production. Only at this point is further processing using chemical or electrochemical processes recommended for permanent corrosion or oxidation protection of the perforated sheets.

Reliable material from the EMW Steel Service Centre

High-quality perforated sheets are a prerequisite for durable solutions. The base material comes from the SCHÄFER WERKE Group's EMW Steel Service Centre, one of the largest plant-independent steel service centres in Europe.

Among many other steel grades, Magnelis® flat steels from ArcelorMittal are processed, which are also available from EMW. Magnelis® flat steels are characterised by self-regeneration at cut edges and are therefore particularly resistant to corrosion.



Characteristic radiator grille from Fendt, supplied ready for installation

The perforated sheets, which are manufactured with a wide variety of hole patterns, can be finished in the standard RAL colours at the factory.

Complexity in diversity

The company's product range includes over 400 immediately available hole patterns, which are designed as round, square, slotted or hexagonal perforations. Steel, stainless steel, aluminium, copper, zinc, brass and plastic are used for processing.

In addition to perforation, SCHÄFER Perforated Metal offers a wide range of processing services, in particular lasering, edging, notching, punching, degreasing, powder coating, painting and anodising. This enables the delivery of ready-to-install components, also just-in-time.

Sustainability in the beverage industry

Interview with SCHÄFER WERKE Managing Director Guido Klinkhammer

The use of reusable containers in the beverage industry is an important step towards sustainability. Guido Klinkhammer knows and appreciates the advantages of stainless steel KEGs and IBC and is aware of the future challenges facing the beverage industry.

In a detailed interview, the Managing Director of SCHÄFER WERKE gave Sachon Verlag

an insight into the future of SCHÄFER Container Systems. In the interview, Klinkhammer talks about the many possible uses of stainless steel KEGs and IBC and their contribution to the circular economy. In particular, he emphasises the important role of metal as a sustainable material with various advantages.

A central theme of the interview is the growing importance of the circular economy in the beverage industry. Stainless steel KEGs and IBC offer considerable ecological advantages due to the possibility of reusability and thus contribute to a reduction

in the ecological footprint. Klinkhammer explains that the proven material properties of stainless steel – such as durability and high quality assurance for food and beverages – make this material a particularly sustainable choice.

SCHÄFER Container Systems is continuously opening up new areas of application with stainless steel and is endeavouring to develop innovative packaging solutions. Sustainable production methods, such as the construction of a solar park, play an important role in reducing environmental pollution.



You can read the full interview here.

Advancing sustainability in Europe with stainless steel KEGs

As the leading organisation in the promotion of stainless steel kegs, the Steel Keg Association is actively committed to sustainability and environmental protection in the packaging industry.

Stainless steel KEGs offer a durable and environmentally friendly solution for the beverage industry. Compared to single-use packaging, they help to reduce waste and also support the circular economy. To promote sustainability, the Steel Keg Association has extended its programme to Europe.



Its aim is to further disseminate the advantages of stainless steel KEGs in the European beverage industry and to promote the use of reusable packaging. With the extension of the programme, the organisation is sending a further signal in its commitment to a sustainable future in the beverage industry. As SCHÄFER Container Systems, we support the initiative with our products and are pleased with the latest measures taken by the European Parliament to prioritise reusable containers over single-use plastic.

Strengthened market presence

New commercial agencies for Southern Europe and Africa



We are pleased to introduce Stefano Incerti as our “Consulente per il mercato Italiano”. With over 25 years of experience in the metal packaging industry, he brings both his expertise and a large network to our company. His in-depth understanding of the food and beverage industry will help us to further expand our presence in the Italian market. (left image)

With Agrosistema, we have a new commercial agency for Portugal and the Portuguese-speaking countries of Africa. The Sintra-based company has been a supplier of filling machines to the beverage, food, pharmaceutical and chemical industries for many years. With Kai Jusek and his team, Agrosistema is known for its



high quality and excellent service. (centre image)

We welcome Grupo Alfesp as our new commercial agency for Spain. The company specialises in closures and environmentally friendly metal containers. Ildefonso Collado Jiménez and Esperanza Golpe, together with their team, are direct contacts for our customers on site. (right image)

We are delighted to welcome our new colleagues and are pleased to be able to provide our customers with even more targeted and better on-site support from now on.

New contact at SCHÄFER SUDEX: Jiří Souček

Farewell to Zdeněk Zelený



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It is with great sadness that we bid farewell to our colleague Zdeněk Zelený, who passed away during his active service. Zdeněk had been part of SCHÄFER SUDEX since 1995 and, as Sales Manager, was known as a reliable and committed contact person. We will have fond memories of him.

It was originally planned that Jiří Souček would take over Zdeněk's position after his retirement. However, due to the sad circumstances, he has now done so earlier.

Jiří Souček has been with the company since 2013. As an engineer with a degree from the Technical University in Brno, he was initially responsible for the further development of individual production areas as a project manager. His projects included the modernisation of the KEG line and the automation of the IBC container welding systems. In 2019, he took on the role of Sales Manager for IBC and special containers, expanding his area of responsibility to include the sale of KEGs in preparation for Zdeněk's planned retirement.

Since May 2024, Jiří has officially been working as Key Account Manager for IBC and KEGs for Central and Eastern Europe. Together with his colleagues Jana Jelínková and Jaroslava Pavelková, he will continue to drive forward sales there. With his extensive experience, technical knowledge and commitment, he will continue to support our customers and partners as a reliable advisor. We are sure that Jiří will continue the success of SCHÄFER SUDEX in Zdeněk's spirit and we look forward to working with him in the future.

Heating containers as part of the fourth industrial revolution

Novum – Smart Heat Control for heatable stainless steel IBC

Continuous tempering at set times is essential for the production and processing of liquid and viscous media such as chocolate, caramel and wax. As a technical pioneer, SCHÄFER Container Systems has developed a smart heating control system for heatable stainless steel containers. The innovation makes it possible for the first time to control and monitor both individual heating IBC and large fleets centrally in real time, whether in the warehouse, in production or during transport. By increasing process automation, downtimes are reduced, resource efficiency is sustainably improved and consistent product quality is supported.

a dustproof and splash-proof electrical housing (IP 65). The digital unit can be seamlessly integrated into Industry 4.0 processes.

The smart heating control system is supplemented by a backend in the SCHÄFER Cloud and a web front end for operation and display. Integration into third-party cloud solutions is also possible.

The primary function of the unit is to control and monitor the heating output of heating containers at temperatures of up to 120 °C.

Thanks to load-free switching, waste heat and wear are minimised.

The “Smart Heat Control” module combines control, data recording, network connection and operating unit with display in



RCB heating container with digital heating control system and Smart Heat Control web front end for controlling and monitoring individual heating containers and entire fleets

Transformation to digital production

The network connection is established wirelessly via a mobile radio module with SIM card, Bluetooth or Wi-Fi. Compared to analogue controls, which can only be set and

read directly on the IBC, digital controls integrated into networks offer the decisive advantage of being accessible remotely – both manually via a web interface and programmatically.

Smart Heat Control automatically generates warning messages and alarms in the event of deviations from the specified parameters and can correct these independently. This avoids potential problems and minimises downtime.

Traceability and geotracking (location determination) including geofencing (geolocalised limitation) also mean that

heating containers can be managed in real time. Thanks to the scalable integration options, IBC digitalised with Smart Heat Control are particularly advantageous for client communities, such as container rental parks and their customers.

In the production process, power is supplied via a 3-pole mains cable (230 V). If there is no mains connection, such as during transport, a powerful rechargeable battery takes over the power supply to maintain the network and data recording functions as well as active alarms in the event of deviations from set values.

Automated precision, integrated safety, maximum transparency

With Smart Heat Control, you stay in control of your heating containers – no matter where you are

The advantages for you:

Flexibility and efficiency through remote monitoring and control

Optimise production processes through scalable **integration options in existing ERP systems**

Consistently high product quality thanks to automated temperature control

Detailed analysis through data logging

Minimised downtimes through integrated alarm functions

Economical as it can be retrofitted and fits universally

Transparency and efficiency in logistics thanks to geolocation

Retrofittable and universal fitting

The solution also offers maximum flexibility: It can be retrofitted and is highly compatible with existing heating containers, regardless of the manufacturer. Existing SCHÄFER heating IBC can also be upgraded (retrofitted).

The SCHÄFER RCB and CHB heating containers are factory-equipped with the new smart control system and can be seamlessly transferred to the digital room.

You can find more information about Smart Heat Control here.



Micro data centres in clinical data operations

The Hermann-Josef Hospital in Erkelenz prefers individual solutions from the Edge Data Center Programme from SCHÄFER IT-Systems



The Hermann-Josef Hospital in Erkelenz received a four-cabinet IS-1 Edge Row Type 4 system with two SideCoolers mounted in a row and, as the centrepiece of the system, the technology rack with Powerbox from SCHÄFER IT-Systems

Hermann-Josef-Krankenhaus (HJK) Erkelenz in the Heinsberg district of North Rhine-Westphalia is a privately run hospital with 409 beds. Due to advancing digitalisation, it was necessary to invest in a powerful and future-proof IT infrastructure. Like many hospitals, the HJK has an IT landscape that has evolved over many decades. Around 600 client computers now access 100 servers in-house.

Data protection and security are a key issue, particularly in the healthcare sector, and one that IT managers are constantly working on. The same applies to availability, i.e. the reliability of the systems.

Integration of tried and tested modules for a customised overall system

The basic structure of the new decentralised edge computing solution is the IS-1 Edge Row Type 4 four-cabinet system with two SideCoolers from SCHÄFER IT-Systems mounted in a row. The new infrastructure was planned, manufactured, fully assembled on site and put into operation together with the IT service provider netgo – a turnkey solution.

Right at the start of the project, netgo demonstrated the advantages of the SCHÄFER solution: “netgo enabled us to get a compre-

hensive overview of different solutions. I was particularly impressed by the personal invitation to view the Edge product range directly on site at SCHÄFER IT-Systems in Betzdorf,” explains Jürgen Laggner, Head of Information Technology at HJK Erkelenz.

Scalable data centre infrastructure from an experienced solution provider

The Head of Information Technology was particularly impressed by the “Everything from a single source” approach. The compact solution also made the choice of premises very flexible, as it only requires one room.

As part of the German Hospital Future Act (Krankenhauszukunftsgesetz, KHZG), processes are being digitalised bit by bit, which means that the volume of data will continue to increase. In the near future, digital medical records as well as digital care documentation and much more are planned. Thanks to the scalable system approach, the company is now ideally prepared for this.

The compact data centres, so-called edge systems, from SCHÄFER IT-Systems are always handed over fully installed and tested. The installation takes place in the factory and on-site. A comprehensive briefing supports the quick and easy deployment of the system.

SCHÄFER IT-Systems expands throughout Europe

New sales partnerships strengthen international growth

Tailor-made network and server cabinet solutions as well as data centre solutions from SCHÄFER IT-Systems have long been in demand beyond the German market. The company now wants to strategically develop its internationalisation and will significantly expand its sales activities in Europe in the future. New sales partnerships play a central role in providing targeted support to both existing and new customers throughout Europe – always close to the clients and their data centre projects. With this expansion, SCHÄFER IT-Systems is also meeting the needs of existing German customers who have been wanting the delivery of products and solutions in an international environment for some time.

By expanding into European markets, the company is responding to the growing demand for its high-quality IT infrastructure solutions, from data centres to edge computing, and reaffirming its commitment to acting as a reliable partner internationally.

“Our goal is to establish SCHÄFER IT-Systems even more strongly internation-

ally as a synonym for quality made in Germany, high reliability and innovative solutions. In this way, we will significantly increase our export share in the coming years,” explains Thomas Wermke, Division Manager at SCHÄFER IT-Systems. The strategy is Europe-wide, from Scandinavia and the Eastern European markets, to Western and Southern Europe.

“By combining our range of high-performance and energy-efficient products with the expertise of our partners, we can offer solutions that are precisely tailored to the requirements of the respective markets.”

Paul Noack,
Head of International Sales,
SCHÄFER IT-Systems

As part of its expansion, SCHÄFER IT-Systems plans to intensify its cooperation

with regional sales partners throughout Europe, as well as supplying existing customers. This approach enables the company to fulfil specific market requirements. “By combining our range of high-performance and energy-efficient products with the expertise of our partners, we can offer solutions that are precisely tailored to the requirements of the respective markets,” says Paul Noack. He joined the team on 1st April 2024 as Head of International Sales and is jointly responsible for implementing the international growth plans.

The internationalisation strategy is aimed in two directions, explains Paul Noack: “On the one hand, this puts us in a better position to support our existing customers such as data centre general contractors, data centre operators or end customers in their Europe-wide projects – a request that has been made to us time and again. On the other hand, we also see great potential for generating new business by cooperating with experienced and established sales partners.”

Key strengths include extensive project experience and a modern and comprehensive product range – from configurable server rack systems to cooling, power, security and monitoring solutions under the iQdata brand. As part of the family-managed SCHÄFER WERKE Group, the company focuses on values such as quality, innovation, reliability and customer proximity – in future also throughout Europe.





From the left: Ralf Siefen (Managing Director/CEO Data Center Group), Joachim Brenner (First Deputy Mayor of the Betzdorf-Gebhardshain municipality), Michael Becher (Regionale Entwicklungsgesellschaft Betzdorf AöR), Guido Klinkhammer and Thomas Wermke (Managing Director and Head of Sales at SCHÄFER IT-Systems respectively)

Data Center Group and SCHÄFER IT-Systems at DCW

Two innovative companies from the municipality of Betzdorf-Gebhardshain presented themselves at the largest data centre trade fair in Germany in Frankfurt am Main

Two innovative hidden champions from our region increased customer added value and exhibited at the important Data Centre World trade fair in Frankfurt am Main. SCHÄFER IT-Systems specialises in the development, manufacture and sale of products and solutions in the data centre environment. In addition to rack solutions, the focus is also on the cooling and power segments for centralised and decentralised data centres as well as network technology. The Data Center Group focuses on the construction, operation and maintenance of such highly available and sustainable data centres. The two companies also work together in partnership on various projects. The close cooperation is reflected in a high level of customer satisfaction.

With their respective products and services, both companies attach great importance to sustainable and future-proof solutions in an environment of rapidly

“Where Innovation Meets Infrastructure” fits perfectly with both our product range and solution offerings.

*Ralf Siefen,
CEO and Chairman of
the Management Board
Data Center Group
and Thomas Wermke,
Head of Sales SCHÄFER IT-Systems*

growing digitalisation requirements. Customers include companies from all sectors and of all sizes as well as numerous public organisations.

“Data Centre World is one of the most attractive data centre trade fairs in Cen-

tral Europe thanks to its high-quality conferences, renowned speakers and numerous exhibitors. This year’s motto “Where Innovation Meets Infrastructure” fits perfectly with both our product range and solutions,” explain Ralf Siefen, CEO and Chairman of the Management Board of the Data Center Group, and Thomas Wermke, Head of Sales at SCHÄFER IT-Systems, in unison.

The two Rhineland-Palatinate-based companies Data Center Group (based in Wallmenroth) and SCHÄFER IT-Systems (based in Betzdorf) have been attractive medium-sized employers and committed training companies in the region for decades. This is why Joachim Brenner, First Deputy Mayor of the Betzdorf-Gebhardshain municipality, visited both companies at the trade fair in Frankfurt and was impressed by their innovative and sustainable IT solutions.

Efficiency and economy in the working environment

Factory, workshop and office equipment

Top quality

State-of-the-art production site in Germany

Flexibility

Customised cabinet and enclosure solutions

Full-range supplier

Complete product range from a single source

Availability

Fast delivery for the core range



Operating equipment

Lockers
Wardrobes

Workshop equipment

Metal cabinets

- Material cabinets
- Functional cabinets
- Drawer cabinets

 Work tables
 Workbenches

Office furniture

Storage space solutions
 Desk systems
 Office containers

OEM solutions



AI on the rise

SCHÄFER WERKE get involved



The responsible use of AI is crucial to realise the full potential of the technology – without neglecting the risks

In the digital age, dealing with artificial intelligence is a key skill. The SCHÄFER WERKE Group has recognised this and at the beginning of the year gave the go-ahead for training and raising employees' awareness of the use of ChatGPT. The aim is to train employees in the efficient and safe use of the technology and, at the same time, to show them the opportunities and risks.

The collaboration with schäfer BA, which is committed to empowering SCHÄFER employees for the digital transformation, is particularly noteworthy. We were also able to draw on the expertise of the Maschinenraum, a shared ecosystem for networking German SMEs, developed by family businesses for family businesses.

Interactive live presentation of the schäfer BA

The Warm Up ChatGPT: Understanding and using artificial intelligence was the ideal introduction for all employees who wanted to gain a practical overview of the tool. In 120 minutes, the basics and functions of ChatGPT, the art of prompting, the use of ChatGPT plug-ins and the creation of your own GPT-based personal assistant without programming knowledge were presented. In total, over 400 SCHÄFER employees took part in this format. The average rating was 4.5/5 stars.

Sensitive handling of AI as a necessary prerequisite

ChatGPT offers great potential, but also harbours risks. Instead of relying uncritically on the tool, we should use AI wisely.

In the warm-up event initiated by schäfer BA entitled "Between potential and risk: The dark side of artificial intelligence", three SCHÄFER employees made the audience aware of the risks that can be associated with the tool. One thing became particularly clear: The change is in full swing and the current status quo is only an intermediate step for even closer interaction between man and machine.

Intensive training in collaboration with the MASCHINENRAUM

ChatGPT is a tool with enormous power – provided it is used correctly. In the first quarter, 20 people from various areas of SCHÄFER WERKE therefore began the intensive four-week training programme from Maschinenraum, which consisted of theoretical and interactive parts. At the end, all participants had a comprehensive overview and can now share their knowledge with other employees.

ChatGPT guideline for more legal certainty

Despite all the euphoria about the emerging possibilities, it is crucial to provide a transparent framework for the company's internal use of ChatGPT, within which all employees can operate (legally) securely and in the interests of the company. For this reason, an internal guideline has been drawn up to ensure that potential and opportunities remain at the forefront of future utilisation.

Focus on strategies

Management Workshop 2024

At the beginning of April, SCHÄFER WERKE Group managers from all business units met for the annual team event. At the Iserlohn venue, participants were also introduced to the new OKS site.

Topics at the event included the key megatrends of sustainability, digitalisation and New Work, which were already defined in 2022, as well as the development of a mission statement for the entire SCHÄFER WERKE Group and the strategies of individual business units.

Over the course of the next one and a half days, the consolidation of the respective sales and production strategies was a central topic. In four working groups – EMW, Perforated Metal, Container Systems and Equipment Systems – results were developed and presented in several stages, from the introduction to strategic business units through to concrete implementation.

The presentation by WEPA, a family business from our Maschinenraum network, was particularly informative and impressive.

We were able to learn a lot for our company from our experience in strategic planning and day-to-day implementation.

In addition to the content-related topics, the personal exchange between all managers once a year in this format is particularly valuable; be it to learn from each other, to understand each other better or to tackle common goals and projects. Working together instead of side by side is the motto here – in the spirit of the entire SCHÄFER WERKE Group.



Successfully passed

Congratulations to our examinees

This year's examinees have successfully completed their training with us and we could not be more proud of their outstanding achievements.

We give all trainees the opportunity to develop individually according to their strengths. True to our motto "IT'S YOUR WORK", our trainees have been able to make an active contribution through their personal commitment and perseverance. We look forward to continuing to have some of them in our team and to shaping the future together.



Front row (from left): Dennis Baumann, Malik Mikail Kukaci (both punching and forming mechanics), Tim Bäumer and Hannah Moos (both office management assistants). Rear row (from left): Training managers Ralf Braun and Wolfgang R. Weber



The investment in photovoltaic systems sustainably reduces the electricity requirements and carbon emissions of SCHÄFER WERKE, here at the site in Ledeč nad Sázavou

Sustainability in the SCHÄFER WERKE Group

SCHÄFER WERKE is strongly committed to sustainability and is pursuing the goal of becoming climate-neutral by 2030. Processes and products are made more environmentally friendly with targeted measures and strong partnerships. This also includes the use of high-performance photovoltaic systems and a successful trainee project for green roofs.

SCHÄFER WERKE is focussing on the use of green energy, efficient production and the reduction of carbon emissions in all areas of the company. Due to the diversified business units EMW Steel Service Centre, SCHÄFER Office and Operating Equipment, SCHÄFER Container Systems IBC, SCHÄFER Container Systems KEG, SCHÄFER IT-Systems and SCHÄFER Perforated Metal, numerous measures are being pursued to achieve climate neutrality in scope one and two by 2030. All products, investments and processes focus on

durability, the circular economy and the optimal utilisation of resources. This also includes the use of "green" steel and the



"The projects are therefore an important step towards achieving our self-declared goal of achieving climate neutrality within the company by 2030."

*Marcus Düber,
Commercial Managing Director
SCHÄFER WERKE Group*

optimisation of logistics by shifting transport from road to rail. In addition, recycling

measures and circular economy practices actively contribute to achieving sustainability goals.

Close collaboration with partners and cooperation with other companies are also important components of our sustainability efforts. Environmental impact is continuously monitored through certifications and projects. Our long-term goal is to continuously implement innovative strategies to make our processes more environmentally friendly. Transparent reporting and communication of our progress are important to us.

All divisions of the SCHÄFER WERKE Group will continue to manufacture and supply first-class products in every business area. It is important to us to drive this project forward and show that steel products can also be manufactured in a climate-neutral way.

Photovoltaic projects in Ledeč and Neunkirchen

We are investing in high-performance photovoltaic (PV) systems in both Ledeč and Neunkirchen. This measure will enable us to cover a significant proportion of our electricity requirements ourselves in future, improve

SCHÄFER WERKE's ecological footprint and save considerable carbon emissions.

The new PV system at our Czech site will go into operation in August. The total area of PV elements installed in recent months covers 1460 square metres. With 538 modules on the roof of the production facility in Ledeč nad Sázavou and 120 additional modules on the hall façade, the newly installed solar system has an output of 305 kilowatts peak (kWp).

The dimensions of the future ground-mounted PV system on the Pfannenbergl in Neunkirchen are significantly larger: An output of two megawatts peak (2 MWp) will be realised here from over 4500 solar modules. The go-ahead for this project – the largest ground-mounted PV system in the Siegen-Wittgenstein district to date – was given in September 2023. The substructure for the PV modules will be erected there from August. With X-Carb® from our business partner Arcelor-Mittal, we have made a conscious decision in favour of a CO₂-reduced, sustainable steel quality. The 11,500 square metre site also offers valuable retreats for plants, insects, birds and reptiles.

"With the investments totalling millions at both sites, we will be able to generate a significant proportion of our electricity requirements ourselves in an environmentally friendly way in future," explains Marcus Düber, Commercial Director of the SCHÄFER WERKE Group. "The

projects are therefore an important step towards achieving our self-declared goal of achieving climate neutrality within the company by 2030."

Trainee project on green roofs

In May 2022, our trainees developed numerous ideas of their own for ecologically valuable projects in a sustainability workshop. As part of SCHÄFER WERKE's overall sustainability strategy, this provides valuable impetus. One successful project is the greening of the almost 75 square metre roof area of the craftsmen's garage. Trainees Jan-Silas Mayenschein, Marlon Jung, Colin Kring, Linus Hirz and Paula Richter worked together to implement the multi-layer structure for the new green roof. The five trainees were supported in their voluntary work by horticulturist Thomas Stähler, Christoph Diefenbach, who has been involved in the sustainability project since the first workshop, and our training managers Wolfgang R. Weber and Ralf Braun.

Green roofs create new habitats for plants and endangered insects, counteract land sealing, bind CO₂ and can store rainwater.

Back in April last year, our trainees lent a hand with the reforestation of a wooded area in the Hauberg in central Germany. This commitment to the sustainability projects shows that more sustainability can be achieved if everyone actively participates.



Under the guidance of horticulturist Thomas Stähler, the trainees laid the multi-layer structure for the new green roof in spring (left). The result is revealed in all its splendour in summer.

SCHÄFER WERKE Group



Head office and plant, Neunkirchen (Germany)



Betzdorf plant (Germany)



Treuen plant (Germany)



OKS Iserlohn plant (Germany)



Ledeč nad Sázavou plant (Czech Republic)

Active worldwide with diversified business areas

At our state-of-the-art locations in Germany, the Czech Republic and the USA, more than 1,100 employees contribute to the success of the SCHÄFER WERKE Group every day. As a group of companies with over 85 years of experience in steel processing and headquartered in Neunkirchen in the Siegerland region, we are active worldwide with the diversified business units EMW Steel Service Centre, SCHÄFER Office and Operating Equipment, SCHÄFER Container Systems IBC, SCHÄFER Container Systems KEG, SCHÄFER IT-Systems and SCHÄFER Perforated Metal. Entrepreneurial spirit, market orientation and diversification have been the driving forces of our family business since its foundation. Outstanding product quality incorporating the latest technologies and close cooperation with our business partners are the basis of our success.

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