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Solingen

Grinding Machine Builder Siepmann is Back



CEO and Owner Andreas Quak (r.), Frank E. Siepmann (m.) and Senior Manager Wilfried Clotten in front of an old poster of the traditional Solingen company. FOTO: Melchior

Solingen. Perfect times for Siepmann: with an expected turnover of "well over ten million Euro" 2017 will be the best year in the company's history which goes back until 1885. In 2004 the company suffered a setback: Frank E. Siepmann had to shut down the production at Eintrachtstraße, the assets were acquired by the Global Retool Group (GRG), headquartered in Lebach in Saarland. The brand and the know-how survived, the company itself was merged with SVQ GmbH. Author: Fred Lothar Melchior

Since mid-May Siepmann is back in Solingen: At Mankhauser Straße the grinding machine builder now presented its new service, engineering and sales office. "It was not for sentimental reasons that we chose Solingen", says Andreas Quak, majority owner of GRG. The actual trigger was the highest order backlog in the history of the company. "This encouraged us to say: now we must and we can invest."

"We want to improve the customer relationship", emphasizes Quak who was in charge of the company Honsberg Lamb in Remscheid in earlier years. The visitors' interest was really high: 95 percent of the invited companies from Solingen and Wuppertal accepted, says the engineer. At the office in Mankhauser Straße the manufacturers of cutlery, hand tools and machine blades can now directly liaise with SIEPMANN engineers, process technicians, sales and service experts. "You will find all our specialists here," Quak adds.

The experts for grinding and polishing machines have established their office with roundabout 300 square meters of space on the first floor of the ancient factory of Messrs. Kürten, a former manufacturer of dental instruments. There is room for 20 employees; twelve people already moved from Lebach to Ohligs. Almost half of them are coming from Solingen. The machines will still be built in Saarland. "But the know-how is in Solingen," says Quak.

The largest part of the experience contributed Frank E. Siepmann. "He actually retired from active service just last year at the time of his 75th birthday, and he still advises us on important matters", says Andreas Quak in praise of the former owner who ran the company for many years. The family name shall not only continue to survive as a brand name, but in fact as an independent company again. The owner and CEO is planning to establish Siepmann GmbH in 2018. "It was a long way", tells Quak in retrospect of the years after the acquisition. "While Siepmann was a machine manufacturer in the past, they are now a supplier of flexible grinding systems. It's all about automation."

During the two-day opening event the visitors were able to learn more about the company's industry 4.0 solutions for cutlery and tool manufacturers. Such solutions are not only interesting for the domestic industry. About four fifths of the sales are achieved outside Germany. North America always was and still is a strong market for Siepmann. "But we also supply to European countries ", explains Andreas Quak – such as Italy, France, Spain and Switzerland.

"We do not want to be structured like a large corporation, but like a family-owned company", Quak points out. "We do not want to be big and slow, but small and fast. In the holding company we have only three people."

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