



Global Premium Service in a Changing World

The BUHLMANN GROUP Vision

COMPANY



WE ARE THE FAMILY-OWNED COMPANY,
ACTING GLOBALLY FOR OUR PARTNERS.

IN A CONSTANTLY CHANGING WORLD
WE REMAIN THE LEADING STOCKIST.

OUR PREMIUM SERVICE IMPLIES
TRUST AND RELIABILITY.

This is the BUHLMANN GROUP's corporate vision, developed by management and the directors. "The working group developed our vision in a joint workshop and arrived at the final formulation", reports Rubina Böske, Business Development Manager, who chaired the event. To achieve this, a number

of questions proved relevant: Who are we? What is our core business? What are we currently focussed on? "Once we had considered additional factors such as the market situation, the competition, opportunities and risks, a clear image emerged, resulting in our corporate vision. Which, by the way, is based on our guiding principles, without this having been consciously expressed in the creation process", says Oliver Buhlmann, Chief Executive Officer and managing partner.

Signal to stakeholders

But what does the corporate vision mean in daily business? "Regardless of what the market does, BUHLMANN thinks dynamically and reacts sustainably to changes, allowing us to continue to offer the trust and security to which our partners have become accustomed", explains Oliver Buhlmann. The individual sentences of the vision have additional meanings for each individual. "All our colleagues, but also all our partners, associate different approaches from their own areas or from collaboration with BUHLMANN with the terms

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used. But in the end, the objective remains the same for all and we are all working together towards this common goal", says Jörg Klüver, Chief Operations Officer.

The guiding principle is not only apparent within the company, thanks to the images highlighting our vision on display at all our sites. "We wanted to visualise the vision, thereby making it tangible to the employees, as well as our partners", explains Oliver Buhlmann. An image film, in which all the elements of the BUHLMANN vision can be identified, then arose from this idea. The film can now be viewed on the BUHLMANN YouTube channel.

BUHLMANN Opens New Company in Turkey

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On 3 October this year, we not only celebrated the Day of German Unity in Bremen, but also the founding of a new subsidiary company. BUHLMANN Turkey Tube Fittings Çelik Ticaret Limited Şirketi was created from the liaison office that had been in Istanbul since 2009. In past years, this office had explored the market to find additional BUHLMANN investment options.

"We decided to take this step, because the liaison office only had a limited licence and had determined over the years that a permanent local presence made very good sense", explains Rubina Böske, Business Development Manager, who oversaw the founding of the new office. In addition, a company brings further benefits compared to a liaison office: "BUHLMANN Turkey may now act independently, which was previously not allowed", says Rubina Böske. However, strategic decisions are still closely coordinated with the Director of the International Sales Division in Bremen, Christian Dörner, and his department.

In Turkey, in particular, it is especially important to have local personnel to handle market activities. "Ideally, the employee is of Turkish origin and therefore well

versed in both the culture and the language", explains Rubina Böske and adds: "Here, we found the right person in Gülseren Aytekin four years ago. She continues to enjoy the same trust that we place in the market, despite the current market situation, and with the incorporation

we aim to signal the importance of this market."

Difficult circumstances

Gülseren Aytekin, Head of Sales, greatly appreciates this symbol of confidence. "I am very pleased about BUHLMANN's trust in the

marketplace and the establishment of the subsidiary company", she explains and adds: "The situation in Turkey at the moment is neither easy nor predictable. There is a big question mark over the market. In the summer, it appeared as though demand was receding, then everything changed again. The political situation meant a fall in investments and credit insurers lowered or cancelled credit lines, which then had a bearing on our business."

Despite this, Gülseren Aytekin remains optimistic and recognises Turkey's potential in the successful projects implemented during the past year in these difficult circumstances. The establishment of the subsidiary company and the newly-gained freedom contribute to this: "We are now allowed to trade more actively and can import, export, buy and sell in the domestic Turkish market", Gülseren Aytekin explains. She has a clear target for future development: "These may be important factors for customer acquisition and growth. In this way, we will increase our budget and our market shares. And in a few years perhaps our headcount will also grow."



Improved Logistics Processes –

BUHLMANN and Brinker Fetten Develop Closer Ties

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As a merchant, it is especially important to deliver the ordered goods to the customer as quickly as possible. If you rely on external service providers for this, both sides profit from long-term and close cooperation, which ultimately also benefits the customer. An ideal example of this is the cooperation with our contract logistics partner Brinker Fetten Logistik GmbH & Co. KG, who carries out German domestic goods deliveries on behalf of the BUHLMANN GROUP. Recently, the two companies' IT departments have been cooperating even more closely.

The BUHLMANN and Brinker Fetten systems have been linked via an

interface since mid-August 2017. "For a haulier, it is very important in terms of scheduling to know at an early stage what, when, how much and to where the goods need to be transported", explains Johannes Eimer, IT Applications Manager, who was on the project team. Brinker Fetten employs a special IT system for this planning process. Previously, the information required for this was exported and transferred manually from the BUHLMANN software. "The data were then manually imported again at Brinker Fetten. This process not only took a long time, but was also a source of errors", says Johannes Eimer.

No media discontinuities

With the two systems now linked, the required data are transmitted electronically to Brinker Fetten. All modifications made are saved directly to a dedicated server, from where they are automatically retrieved and processed. "The aim is to exchange even more data at a later date in order to deliver more transparency to both sides and consequently provide all supply chain participants with all the relevant data", says Thorsten Hofmann, Head of Logistics, who played a major role in the project.

In addition to the protagonists already named, Christian Kloetzke, Senior Logistics Team Manager, and Karsten

Schmeißer, Logistics Team Manager, were also particularly involved in the project on the BUHLMANN side. "There was a lot to do, developing an interface to a different company is always very comprehensive, because some of the processes are highly complex and numerous details must be taken into consideration.", reports Christian Kloetzke in retrospect. "However, project implementation is extremely interesting and we can see enormous benefits in it for all concerned", he adds.

A Cross-Piece of Epic Dimensions

PROJECTS

Early in 2017 the Sales West department, headed by Sebastian Meis, Head of Sales, received a very special order: A customer from Southern Germany required new pipes and fittings for his refinery. The coker unit, the heart of the operation, was in need of renewal. Here, the residues from crude distillation are converted into gas and gasoline constituents, gas oils such as fuel oil and coke fuel. The complete scope of this major project: Almost 110,000 kilograms.

In addition to the very extensive order, a specific product presented a very special challenge: "A cross-piece, which had never been ordered from us before under these conditions, was needed for the unit", explains Simon Thomassen, Sales Manager, who played a major role in the project, together with Sebastian Meis. Sebastian adds: "With a Weighing 2.2 tonnes, the cross-piece is indeed the most expensive and heaviest fitting that we have ever sold in the history of the BUHLMANN GROUP."



On the left the material from which the cross (right) was made

A close partnership pays

The Northern Italian company Tectubi Raccordi S.p.A., who manufactured the cross-piece and is part of the Allied International S. R. L. Group, contributed to the successful execution of the order. "Our partner had also never produced a cross-piece of this size and under these conditions", says Sebastian Meis. The special challenge presented here was not only the A234 WP9 material, the dimensions and the huge wall thickness, but also quite simply

the fourth hole in the cross-piece. "Compared to a T-piece, manufacturing a cross-piece is technically far more complex", explains Simon Thomassen.

The team and the customer were more than satisfied with the result. The close cooperation between Allied International and BUHLMANN, which Sebastian Meis appreciatively emphasises, was also fundamental to this success: "We enjoyed extensive support and were also at the customer's site

during production. Collaboration with Allied International was truly excellent."



Christmas Has Come Early

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Just ahead to Christmas, there was another reason for joy in Burghausen and Duisburg: The next round of prize payouts were due.

The colleagues in Duisburg had not a single incident in 180 days and the next prize is already within sight. In Burghausen, they celebrated over 30 accident-free days – the prize was a tasty breakfast.



Duisburg



Duisburg

Under a campaign entitled 'BUHLMANN Health First (BHF)', the BHF team is working on preventive measures in order to reduce work-related accidents and illness at the company's German sites.

On Chemical Analyses and Corrosion Tests

First Materials Tester in a BUHLMANN Apprenticeship

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At BUHLMANN GROUP, we make a big thing of quality, and this is emphasised by our close collaboration with MT Laboratories GmbH. In light of the need for long-term personnel planning, it makes sense that corresponding apprenticeships are offered. This primarily includes that of material tester.

Since early August, Avni Zeqiri has been training as the Group's first material tester at BUHLMANN in Duisburg. "During the first few weeks he has been able to gain an extensive insight into various departments", explains Matthias Vogt, Technical Services Manager, who is supervising Avni Zeqiri from the BUHLMANN side during his training. "Among other things, he has spent time in the warehouse, in quality assurance and in job preparation, and has quickly settled in", he adds. His first impression has been very positive, as Avni Zeqiri himself explains: "The comprehensive familiarisation period



Avni Zeqiri during materials testing

in both companies allowed me to gain a broad overview, which confirmed for me personally that I have chosen the right apprenticeship."

The 22-year-old will complete his apprenticeship in cooperation with MT Laboratories GmbH, his career training advisor Stefan Rudack, Duisburg branch manager, is in the partner company. "There, Avni Zeqiri

will learn to perform and evaluate mechanical-technological material tests, to analyse metallic materials chemically and to perform corrosion and material failure investigations. He will also get to grips with non-destructive material testing", says Matthias Vogt. Theoretical knowledge is additionally taught at technical college.

Apprenticeships at BUHLMANN

"It is our aim to reinforce Technical Services over the long-term and we therefore decided to offer apprenticeships specifically for this department", says Ronald Speidel, Head of Human Resources. In addition to the profession of material tester, BUHLMANN GROUP also offers apprenticeships in other professions. Alongside to wholesale, export and import merchant and warehouse clerk, this also includes milling machine operator, chef, IT systems integration specialist and office management clerk. "We have been training apprentices in Germany since the mid-1950s, that is, practically as long as the dual vocational training system has existed. We are, naturally, very proud of this", explains Ronald Speidel. And with the diversity of available apprenticeships, BUHLMANN GROUP is well positioned in terms of personnel in the long-term.

Apprentices on Tour

New BUHLMANN Staff Gain Exciting Insights into Meyer Werft shipyard and N+F

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Early in October seven apprentices made their way to the

metropolis that is Hamburg. Their destination was N+F Handelsgesellschaft mbH, which collaborates closely with BUHLMANN. In addition to trading in pipe accessories, the company also owns its own production facility.

And it was precisely this that impressed the new BUHLMANN staff most. "The flange turning shop, where series and bespoke production were explained to us, was especially interesting", reports Marvin Giesbers, wholesale, export and import merchant apprentice. Here, the apprentices were able to see a flange being clamped and machined in a variety of ways. "Whether turning, threading or machining the sealing face – a lot

was explained and demonstrated to us. The tools used for machining flanges were also explained. Drills and lathe inserts are used for this", says Marvin Giesbers.

Following a guided tour of the various N+F warehouses, which includes a high-bay warehouse, an automated small parts warehouse was also demonstrated. Here, the apprentices saw how the entire warehouse is managed using a scanners. In addition to numerous practical insights, there was also plenty of theory: "In a technical presentation of the various types of flange, we also learned more about their practical applications on the pipe", says Marvin Giesbers. "And we saw the various flange manufacturing processes, such as rolling and forging, in an interesting film", he adds. All the apprentices were extremely impressed by this trip and took away a lot of insights for their daily work.



Twelve Bremen apprentices and other colleagues travelled to Papenburg in October. Meyer Werft GmbH & Co. KG, one of the world's largest cruise liner shipyards, is situated directly on the River Ems. To date, 44 luxury liners have been built in the shipyard, one of the region's largest employers with 3,300 employees.

So it is hardly surprising that the excursion made a lasting impression, as Thore Braunschweig, wholesale, export and import merchant apprentice, acknowledges. "The dimensions of Meyer Werft were striking. It's like a small town", he explains. Anna-Lena Düsseldorf, also a wholesale, export and import merchant apprentice, adds: "It takes almost ten minutes to walk through one shed and you feel quite small standing beside a cruise liner." However, not only the size of the ships left an impression, but so did their construction. "Everything is thoroughly planned, and even though it appears chaotic, everything is well under control", says Thore Braunschweig.

Important insights

The excursion was thus a great opportunity to present the practical applications of materials to the apprentices in more detail, in addition to theoretical knowledge. "From delivery to shipbuilding, we saw the complete product flow and were able to better understand the individual construction processes and what lies behind them", explains Torsten Cordes, Team Manager Sales North, who organised the excursion.

For example, in-house goods processing in the sawing centre was carefully scrutinised. Here, various BUHLMANN products are welded together to form units. "I am still new to the company but now have more specific understanding of where our goods go and how they are processed", says Anna-Lena Düsseldorf.

"The goal was to provide the apprentices and colleagues from the different departments an insight into the business processes at Meyer Werft in order to aid understanding of one's own duties from the perspective of the customer's requirements and to adapt these to the customer's needs", reports Torsten Cordes. In addition to the new BUHLMANN staff, representatives from the warehouses, Procurement, Job Preparation and Sales also attended. Another benefit: "We have been collaborating with Meyer Werft for 40 years. The participants were thus made aware of how important long-term partnerships are for all involved", explains Torsten Cordes and adds: "This was also evident in the fact that we had the opportunity to visit the shipyard and in the committed Meyer Werft team on-site, who we would like to thank again for making this trip possible."



The apprentices listen with interest



Group picture in front of the Meyer Werft

BUHLMANN Sites from a Different Perspective:

Bremen, from the Weser to the World

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Bremen's Town Hall and the Cathedral on the Market Square

© Ingrid Krause / BTZ Bremer Touristik-Zentrale

When presenting the BUELMANN sites, there is one city that obviously cannot be left out: Bremen. After all, everything began in the Hanseatic City on the River Weser in 1945. This wasn't a coincidence: Bremen has been shaped by global trade for centuries and still plays a major role in this area today in Germany.

However, not only trade is very important to the city, but also the foundation for this economic success: the River Weser. Almost 2000 years ago, Bremen's first settlements appeared directly on Germany's fifth largest river. And even today the water body forms an important focal point for the more than 557,000 residents. This is a place to meet and enjoy the sunshine – which, admittedly, could dare to peek through the cloud cover a little bit more often. Whether at the free, five-day open air Breminale festival or on the way to a football match of the city's best-known export, SV Werder Bremen football club. By the

beer gardens and cocktail bars, a great meeting place in the evenings or at weekends", he adds.

Donkey, dog, cat & cockerel

If you are from outside of Bremen, your first thought is probably of something completely different: The Bremen Town Musicians. The main characters in the Grimms' fairy tale can be appropriately found in the centre of town. "They stand at the west of the town hall, as a bronze

completely different perspective", he explains.

Into the future

Downriver, the city presents itself from a more modern side. In the Überseestadt, as the new Bremen district has been known since 2009, one of Europe's largest urban planning projects is being implemented. On around 300 hectares of land, new life is being breathed into a former port area



Bremen's oldest district: the Schnoor

© Ingrid Krause / BTZ Bremer Touristik-Zentrale



Bremen's landmark: The Bremen Town Musicians

© BTZ Bremer Touristik-Zentrale
(www.bremen-tourism.de)

way, the stadium is located directly on the river bank and, uniquely in the German Bundesliga, can be accessed on match days by ship. On warm summer days Michael Ober, Finance Coordinator, also recommends a visit to the historical Schlachte promenade. "Here, directly along the Weser, there are

sculpture", reveals Heike Körte, IT Application Technician. "Grasping both the donkey's legs with two hands is said to bring good luck. This is important, because if you only touch one leg, one donkey offers another a hand, as they jokingly say in Bremen", she adds, laughing. Coming back to the town hall it, together with the Roland statue, symbol of worldly freedom, it has been a UNESCO world heritage site since 2004. And for good reason: it is one of Germany's most important Gothic and Weser Renaissance structures and surprises visitors with numerous magnificent rooms.

Directly opposite the town hall an alleyway leads to the Böttcherstraße. The street and its artistic architecture form a rare example of expressionism and are home to crafts workshops and small art galleries. You can travel further back in time in the Schnoorviertel, only a few minutes away. "Small, narrow, 15th and 16th century timber-frame buildings in narrow alleys, a beautiful place in the centre of town", reveals Michael Ober about the oldest district. Torsten Cordes, Team Manager Sales – North, has a very special tip: "You can enjoy the historical city of Bremen in a whole new light during the night watchman's round. This adventurous tour takes place in the dark and shows the old town from a

Many of the inhabitants of Bremen can be found at the Weser, like here at the Schlachte.
© Birgit Benke / Schlachte Marketing und Service Verband

with impressive contemporary architecture. A diverse mix of services, offices, commerce, port business and logistics, recreation, culture and living regularly gives the area a new look. Only two kilometres from the historical town centre, the Überseestadt appeals to visitors with its unique gastronomical, cultural and recreational offerings. Whether cabaret theatre, port museum, ultraviolet mini-golf, Zentrum für Automobilkultur (Centre for Automobile Culture), Bremen's largest indoor football pitch or simply the maritime flair: there's something here for young and old alike.

If you like a more rural atmosphere, you'll love Blockland. This Bremen district is a purely rural landscape,

is referred to as a "village on the edge of a city" and is a favourite local recreational destination. "Here, bordered by the typical northern German thatched roof houses, you can find one of Germany's best rollerblading routes. And you can enjoy the sun and nature on the Wümme River with a peat barge journey through Teufelsmoor (Devil's Moor)", Heike Körte explains to us. However, if you would prefer to explore Blockland by bike instead of rollerblades, you should take a detour to the Kaemena farm, as Torsten Cordes tells us: "Here, you can enjoy the best organic ice cream and watch the farmer milking the cows for the next portion", he reveals.

"Ischa Freimaak!"

If the people of Bremen are generally regarded as conservative, twice a year they show what they are really made of. While in February – who would have imagined it - Europe's largest samba carnival tours through Bremen's streets, with its many colourful masks and loud drums, and, what's more, usually at low temperatures and constant rain, the grounds behind the main station are lit up with all sorts of colours in the autumn. On these event grounds, not far from the popular Bürgerpark, the city's second largest park, and always worth a visit, the so-called fifth season has started. And in Bremen this has meant, since 1035, "Ischa Freimaak!", which can be translated as "It's the free market!". North Germany's largest public festival today attracts around four million people to the city. Roller coasters, bratwurst or the beer tents, there's plenty to discover. And in addition to trade and the Weser, the Freimarkt has also become one of those things that characterise the city and the life of the people of Bremen.

IMPRINT

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