



The participants of the exchange around Christian Dörner (fourth from left)

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COMPANY & STRATEGY

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Into the New Year in a Positive Mood

COMPANY

The BUHLMANN Rohr-Fittings-Stahlhandel GmbH + Co. KG (BUHLMANN RFS) export specialists met for the third time in Bremen for an internal information exchange. In addition to current topics, the focus was on new executives and a grand finale: a visit to the Bremen Freimarkt, the largest folk festival in northern Germany.

On the first day, before the big event, the participants from the four BUHLMANN RFS sites in Finland, Italy, the Netherlands and Turkey, as well as executives from the International Sales Division,

exchanged views on current events, the current market situation and the budget for the year 2019. "By holding these annual meetings, we aim to encourage exchanges on a personal level and motivate ourselves for the coming year", says Christian Dörner, Director of the International Sales Division, explaining the background to the meeting.

On the second day, the talks were expanded and new executives Harun Ucar, Senior QM Group Manager, and Torsten Cordes, Head of Sales North, introduced

themselves. In addition, the IT and Finance departments presented current projects. "At the end of the meeting we, the export team, visited Bremen's Freimarkt together", says Christian Dörner. "We spent an enjoyable evening there and are looking to start the New Year in a positive mood", he concluded in good spirits.

A Successful Year Comes to an End

COMPANY



Quality management plays a major role at BUHLMANN

The QEHS team under the new leadership of Harun Ucar, Senior QM Group Manager, can look back on an exciting and varied year. The department is responsible for quality, environmental and occupational safety management and supervises internal and external BUHLMANN GROUP audits.

In the period from mid-February until the end of May 2018, an external audit was carried out by TÜV Rheinland Cert. The special feature this year was that, in addition to recertification for our integrated QEHS management system, which implements the requirements of ISO 9001 for quality management, ISO 14001 for environmental management and BS OHSAS 18001 for occupational safety manage-

ment, conversion to the revised 2015 standards was successfully completed for both ISO 9001 and ISO 14001. The new certificates, which are valid for the next three years, can be downloaded from the BUHLMANN website.

The department comprises three employees: Harun Ucar has taken over the management of QEHS as the new Senior QM Group Manager and is supported by Andrea Küster as QEHS Manager. The two are assisted by trainee Anzor Dzabrailov.

Electronic Invoice Management Helps with On-Time Payment

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The year is 2014: every day around one hundred letters are received at the BUHLMANN location in Bremen. The majority are invoices. These are scanned by the Financial Department and stored in the ERP system. All manually. In the event of invoice differences which could emerge during the checking process, the sales staff are notified of a new invoice with a workflow message on the ERP system start page so that it can be checked and released again. If the employee is absent, there is no substitution. All invoices are forwarded throughout the company or from location to location.

The year is 2018: the majority of invoices are no longer received in paper format. Eighty-five percent of the invoices are now sent digitally to the invoice mailbox.

Thanks to electronic invoice management (EIM), the contents of the documents are automatically recognised, archived and stored in the ERP system. The new workflow was also introduced together with this EIM. Regardless of whether we are dealing with goods, freights or cost invoices: in 2018, all invoices are digitally forwarded to the respective employees. One advantage of the workflow is the possibility of storing a substitution that automatically takes effect when the employee is absent.

Since August 2016 this new invoice management system has been gradually introduced at DYLAN, BUHLMANN RFS, BUHLMANN Austria and BUHLMANN France. The workflow is already established at BUHLMANN RFS. "Processes are



BUHLMANN will mainly process invoices digitally

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thus optimised and shortened, so that payment deadlines can be met more effectively", explains Petra Asendorf, Senior Manager Finance.

Focus on the High-Quality Product:

Quality Day at Vallourec

COMPANY

BUHLMANN GROUP stands for premium quality. This is, of course, also reflected in the supplier selection process. Vallourec is a close partner and a guarantor for high-quality steel pipes. The French manufacturer also attaches great importance to the quality of its products. Christian Baum, BUHLMANN's Director Technical Business Division, experienced this first-hand at the company's Quality Day this summer.

"On Quality Day, in all factories worldwide, everything revolves around product quality for a whole day. The aim is to sensitise employees for the topic and thus improve

quality", Dr. Christian Baum explains the background to the campaign day. At each site, a video message from the CEO Philippe Crouzet is first shown, in which he discusses those areas with potential for improvement. Numerous workshops also offer learning opportunities.

In addition, customers are invited to listen to specialists and executives illustrate the importance and scope of their daily work routine from an external point-of-view. "For this reason, I spoke at the Reisholz factory in front of around 50 guests on quality features and requirements from the customers' perspective", says Dr. Christian

Baum. Following a presentation of the BUHLMANN GROUP aimed at bringing the audience closer to the company's premium philosophy, which is also expected from suppliers, he talked about Vallourec from BUHLMANN's perspective. "Here, I discussed the quality features and requirements that are important to us, including some critical remarks", explains Dr. Christian Baum. Among other things, supplier evaluations, sustainability, complaint handling, customer care and communications were discussed. Overall, Dr. Christian Baum attested the high-quality products, well-suited to BUHLMANN GROUP as a premium trading house, to

the guests. Other quality features such as delivery reliability, markings or documentation, which are inseparably connected to the product, were also discussed. Those in attendance especially enjoyed the feedback on the Reisholz site: "The work methodology is exemplary and the products are manufactured with great precision. From our point of view, the factory has model character", said Dr. Christian Baum.



Dr. Christian Baum at the Vallourec Quality Day

BUHLMANN: The First Steel Merchant to Supply Flange Kits

COMPANY



The BUHLMANN experts at the REYHER training

The **BUHLMANN GROUP** is a premium trading house for steel pipes. In addition to pipes, we also carry a range of fittings and flanges. **BUHLMANN** has been offering connecting elements for flanges since October of this year. We met with Sebastian Meis, Head of Sales West, and Torsten Cordes, Head of Sales North, for an interview and spoke about the flange kits.

What is the reasoning behind BUHLMANN GROUP offering flange kits as of this year?

Sebastian Meis: We have always held related products in our warehouse in the past, because every customer who buys flanges from us inevitably also needs fittings at some point. We therefore developed the kit packages in collaboration with the Business Development department. We have chosen the chemicals industry, or more precisely the pipeline construc-

tors of the chemical industry, to be the first sector to which we supply the kits. The customer not only receives the flanges from us, but also a predefined package containing bolts, nuts and washers. This offering makes BUHLMANN unique on the market.

The topic of connecting elements is completely new territory for BUHLMANN GROUP. How did you prepare for this?

Sebastian Meis: The subject is not entirely new. In the past, bolts, nuts and washers were always added on request. To allow us to better meet the needs of our customers, colleagues from the Sales Domestic, Export and Quality Assurance teams attended a training session at REYHER Nchfg. GmbH & Co. KG. REYHER has been trading with connecting elements and fixing techniques for many years. We are very grateful that we were able to participate in the training programme.

Torsten Cordes: In a technical exchange, we were able to think through new ideas and come to an agreement on how future flange kits can be put together in both a demand-oriented and a service-oriented way.

What did you learn at the training session?

Sebastian Meis: In a theoretical element of the training session we discussed regulations and typical materials for pressure equipment applications.

Torsten Cordes: Following the subsequent warehouse inspection, as part of the practical element, the teams learned about the problems that can occur when attaching the flanges. We were immediately presented with solutions, allowing us to respond directly to questions from our customers.

What conclusion do you draw from these insights?

Sebastian Meis: The training session was very successful. I think we are very well equipped to establish the flange kits in our warehouse range. We are looking forward to the new challenges.

Torsten Cordes: We would like to use the flange kit to integrate additional services into our sales process so that we can continue to support our customers in implementing their core competencies. From this perspective, we were able to take a lot away from the day at REYHER for our daily work which will benefit our customers.

Bremen: Four Accident-Free Years

COMPANY



Bremen

Two locations bearing the BUHLMANN-B in their names have been able to break their targets in recent months:

The Burghausen site achieved 360 accident-free days. In the Hanseatic City of Bremen there is a particular sense of pride because there have been no incidents since 8 October 2014, i. e. four years ago. Congratulations!

BUHLMANN Sites from a Different Perspective: Mexico City

On Aztecs, the Fight for Independence and Wrestling

COMPANY

“You either love it or you hate it, even though you are usually in love with it.” This is how Yazmin Martinez, Administration Coordinator, describes Mexico’s capital city, which bears the simple name of Mexico City. Located in the heart of the metropolitan region, which is one of the largest of its kind with a population of 20 million, the Mexican BUHLMANN site recently celebrated its third anniversary.

We aim to take advantage of this seemingly good location to explore the city, which not only has Mexico in its name, but is also the political, economic, social and cultural centre of the country, in addition to being the largest transportation hub. And, in fact, the Museo Nacional de Antropología is located just a stone’s throw from the BUHLMANN office. It not only has the reputation of being one of the most beautiful museums in the world, it also houses numerous Aztec and Mayan exhibits, the most well-known cultures of Central America’s indigenous peoples. The most visited exhibition piece here is the Sun Stone, better known as the Aztec calendar, a 25-tonne, 15th century monolith.

Chapultepec Park, surrounding the Museum, and populated by the locals at weekends, is also worth a visit. It houses a zoo, rides and additional museums. If you follow the Paseo de la Reforma, an impressive boulevard and one of the longest streets in the world, running through the park, it will lead you directly to a Mexico City landmark: El Ángel de la Independencia. Here, we meet Yazmin Martinez, who immediately explains to us the meaning of the imposing 45-metre high column: “Golden and glorious, it is



Colourful boats in Xochimilco © Pixabay

a tiny mausoleum containing the remains of the greatest Mexican generals and leaders of the struggle for independence”, she says.

The centre of Mexico

The heart of Mexico City, the Zócalo, as it is commonly referred to, is located further east. Its proper name is Plaza de la Constitución and it is not only one of the largest and best-known city squares in the world, but also the centre of Mexico. Some of the country’s most important institutions are situated here: the seat of the President of Mexico (Palacio Nacional), the largest cathedral in the country (Catedral Metropolitana) and the Town Hall. The Torre Latinoamericana, from which one has an impressive view of the opera house amongst other highlights, is also located in the immediate vicinity. You really begin to appreciate the enormous dimensions of this metropolis from up here. Yazmin Martinez takes us along to Garibaldi to end the day: “For the party atmosphere, the tequila and the mariachis, the typical Mexican musical formation”, she says with a twinkle in her eye.

We still have a lot to cover the following day, which is why the Garibaldi visit was somewhat restrained. We drive south to Coyoacan. “One of my favourite places in the entire world. It is so colourful, amusing and has a hippy vibe; you can walk for hours without getting bored”, said Yazmin Martinez. It is nevertheless time to set off and continue to Xochimilco. “Here, you can glide along the canals and admire the beautiful gardens and walls of trees on a trajinera, a traditional, brightly painted and decorated boat”, explains Yazmin Martinez. If you are brave, you can also visit Isla de las Muñecas, the Island of the Dolls. Mutilated toy dolls are suspended in the trees across the entire island. They were originally intended to banish the ghost of a girl who supposedly drowned near the island. Now the dolls attract more curious tourists than anything else.

Colourful masks, a lot of shouting

After this slightly gruesome experience, the mood quickly lifts again. Yazmin Martinez takes us along to the Arena Mexico to a Mexican wrestling evening, or as it is called locally: Lucha Libre. “It is a different way to have fun, but I really



Mexico’s national flag on the Zócalo square

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enjoy it”, she reveals to us. The colourful masks, which are also well represented in the audience who follow each fight with bated breath, are typical for the athletes. Those who are not interested in the sport itself are kept well entertained by the surrounding spectacle.

Before it is time to say goodbye, we travel on to Teotihuacán. This archaeological site is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and one of the most important ruined cities in America. It is particularly well known for its sun and moon pyramids. They are the largest structures of their kind on the American continent and the pyramid of the sun is even regarded as the world’s third largest pyramid. The view across the city, which had up to



Lucha libre is a colourful experience

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200,000 residents at its zenith, is unforgettable and lets you quickly forget the arduous journey to the top. Our trip to Mexico City ends with this highlight and, full of anticipation at the thought of returning, we say: adios, goodbye.



A great reward after tough trek: The view in Teotihuacán

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Publisher

BUHLMANN Rohr-Fittings-Stahlhandel GmbH + Co. KG
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28309 Bremen, Germany

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Printing

Druckhaus Humburg,
Bremen, Germany