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# business

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# New Hope for Allergy Sufferers

More than 500 million people around the world suffer from allergies, and this number is on the rise. While seasonal pollen allergies are rarely life-threatening, they significantly diminish the quality of life for sufferers. More severe allergies, such as nut allergies, can lead to anaphylactic shock. This is something that Dr. Flora Beiche-Scholz, Managing Director of ALK-Abelló Arzneimittel GmbH knows only too well. As someone with a severe pine nut allergy, she is even more invested than most in the search for effective treatments. In an interview with European Business, Dr. Beiche Scholz describes how Danish company ALK-Abelló's approach promises hope of relief to the growing number of allergy sufferers worldwide.

**European Business:** Dr. Beiche-Scholz, how does ALK-Abelló aim to address the challenges posed by allergies?

**Dr. Flora Beiche-Scholz:** At ALK-Abelló, our goal for the past 100 years has been to help people with allergies. We focus on treating the root causes of allergies rather than just alleviating symptoms. Our approach involves immunotherapy, which helps the body develop tolerance to allergens. This is crucial because although allergies have become a true epidemic, only a small fraction of allergy sufferers receive adequate treatment.

**European Business:** Can you explain the innovative therapies that ALK-Abelló offers?

**Dr. Flora Beiche-Scholz:** We offer sublingual tablets, which represent a significant advancement in the treatment of allergies. Unlike traditional allergy treatments that often involve injections, sublingual tablets allow patients to take their medication conveniently at home. This therapy works by placing the tablet under the tongue, where it dissolves almost instantaneously and allows the allergens to be absorbed directly into the bloodstream. Sublingual immunotherapy has been shown to be effective for various aller-

gens, including pollen, and house dust mites. The transition to this form of treatment has made it possible for patients to take control of their allergy management in a way that fits seamlessly into their daily lives.

**European Business:** How has this therapy been developed further?

**Dr. Flora Beiche-Scholz:** Since the introduction of our first sublingual immunotherapy tablet (SLIT) in 2006, we have continued to expand our product line, developing new formulations targeting different allergens. This innovation not only improves patient adherence to treatment but also opens up new markets for us, allowing us to reach more allergy sufferers who can benefit from our therapies. Overall, we believe that sublingual tablets offer a promising and patient-friendly option for those seeking relief from their allergies. This was most recently confirmed by the recent approval by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) in the UK of our house dust mite sublingual immunotherapy-tablet for the treatment of persistent moderate to severe allergic rhinitis caused

by house dust mites in adults and adolescents. Furthermore, we recently received the approval by health authorities in 21 EU countries to treat allergies in young children aged 5 to 11 with our house dust mite SLIT treatment. This endorsement not only validates our efforts but also confirms the effectiveness of our products on an international level.

**European Business:** How important is societal acceptance of allergy treatments?

**Dr. Flora Beiche-Scholz:** It is crucial. Many people with allergies do not view themselves as patients and are often unaware of the treatment options available to them. Often, they perceive their allergies as mere inconveniences rather than serious health issues. Therefore, we need to invest in public education as much as we invest in product development.

**European Business:** How does ALK-Abelló address the gap in awareness and education?

**Dr. Flora Beiche-Scholz:** We work to raise awareness through various channels, including informa-



A young boy bravely undergoing an allergen prick test, taking the first step towards understanding and managing his allergies for a healthier future

tional campaigns, partnerships with healthcare professionals, and participation in allergy-related events and conferences. Our goal is to empower patients to seek appropriate medical advice and treatment sooner rather than later. Furthermore, we provide resources and training for healthcare providers to ensure they are well-informed about the latest advancements in allergy treatments, including our allergy-immunotherapy options. By equipping them with the necessary knowledge, we aim to improve the referral process for patients who may benefit from our therapies.

**European Business:** What challenges does ALK-Abelló face in the current market?

**Dr. Flora Beiche-Scholz:** Despite our advancements, we still face challenges, particularly the increasing prevalence of allergic diseases. Factors such as air pollution and climate change contribute to this rise, necessitating ongoing research and development. We need to find innovative



Gowned workers in the production facility, ensuring the highest standards of quality and safety in the manufacturing of life-changing allergy treatments

solutions to improve patient care while addressing the underlying causes of allergies.

**European Business:** How does digitalization play a role in ALK-Abelló's strategy?

**Dr. Flora Beiche-Scholz:** Digitalization is extremely important for us. It offers great potential for enhancing patient education and improving internal efficiency. As demands on companies grow, having strong digital capabilities is essential for meeting these challenges effectively.

**European Business:** What is ALK-Abelló's commitment to social responsibility?

**Dr. Flora Beiche-Scholz:** We are very aware of our social responsibility, particularly regarding gender representation in leadership roles. We strive to create a work environment that promotes diversity and equality of opportunity. Our high employee loyalty and stability reflect our positive corporate culture.

**European Business:** In summary, what is ALK-Abelló's vision for the future of allergy treatment?



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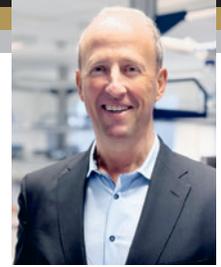
**Dr. Flora Beiche-Scholz:** Our vision is clear: we want to continue to be pioneers in allergy treatment while improving the quality of life for allergy sufferers. With a focus on research, education, and innovative therapeutic approaches, we aim to play a central role in the fight against allergies for many years to come.



Birch pollen being processed for use in allergy immune therapies that offer hope and relief to allergy sufferers around the world



Significant investment in research and development fuels groundbreaking advancements in allergy treatment, paving the way for innovative solutions that improve lives



# Driving Global Health Innovations

Certmedica International GmbH's headquarters in Aschaffenburg in Bavaria, Germany



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Certmedica International GmbH has been an agile player in the healthcare sector since the company was founded in 2005. Headquartered in Aschaffenburg, Germany, Certmedica has steadily built a reputation for its innovative approach to metabolic health, focusing on medical conditions like obesity, cardiovascular diseases, and diabetes. Dr. Marcus Furch, who took on the role of COO in September 2023, brings a unique blend of scientific expertise and business acumen to the table. In our interview, he shared insights into the company's pioneering products, its international expansion, and his vision for the future.

**European Business:** Certmedica has often been referred to as a 'Hidden Champion.' What distinguishes your company in the healthcare market?

**Dr. Marcus Furch:** Certmedica is a privately owned healthcare company whose mission is to improve global health through innovative, evidence-based solutions. We specialize in the development, manufacturing,

and distribution of medical devices, nutritional supplements, and cosmetics. Our flagship products – formoline L112, the leading over-the-counter (OTC) anti-obesity product in Germany, and aldiamed, a moisturizer for dry mouth – are prime examples of our commitment to quality and innovation. What sets us apart is our rigorous scientific foundation. All our products are supported by clinical evidence,



The My-formoline app is a class I medical device that provides users with personalized support, including diet and exercise recommendations. The app was developed in the course of 2024 and is now available in the app stores for German-speaking users



manufactured according to GMP or other relevant standards, and comply with the highest quality certifications, including ISO 13485 and MDR (EU Regulation 2017/745). We also have a strong international footprint, operating in over 40 countries through a network of specialized distributors and local partnerships. Our success is a testament to our dedication to delivering health solutions that truly make a difference.

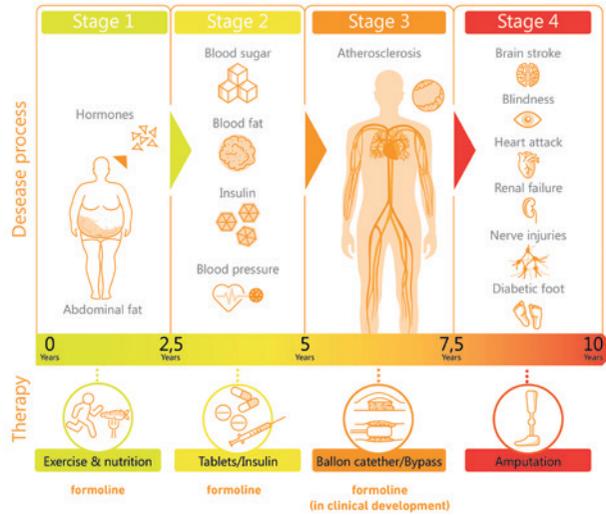
**European Business:** Let's talk about formoline L112. What makes this product so effective for weight management?

**Dr. Marcus Furch:** Excess body weight and obesity are some of the most pressing health challenges of our time, affecting over 650 million people globally. They are increasingly recognized as chronic conditions that often lead to severe complications like diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, and even certain cancers.

Formoline L112 addresses this challenge head-on. Its active ingredient polyglucosamine L112 is a biopolymer of natural origin that binds dietary fats in the digestive system, reducing calorie absorption. This process helps people lose weight and maintain their results over the long term. Clinical studies have shown remarkable outcomes: an average body weight reduction of 12 kg over 12 months, significant improvements in cholesterol and insulin levels, and a reduction in waist circumference. Unlike many alternatives, formoline L112 has no hormonal or systemic side effects, making it a safe and sustainable option. Beyond weight loss, formoline contributes to combating metabolic syndrome, which encompasses a range of conditions like high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and insulin resistance. By targeting abdominal fat – a key risk factor for men in particular – it has proven to be a vital tool for promoting metabolic health.

**European Business:** How is Certmedica leveraging innovation to address future health challenges?

**Dr. Marcus Furch:** Innovation is at the heart of everything we do. For formoline, we're currently conducting clinical trials to confirm its potential for preventing other conditions associated with the progression of metabolic syndrome. These studies are crucial as we aim to expand formoline's applications and reach new patient groups.



Formoline contributes to combating metabolic syndrome, which encompasses a range of conditions like high blood pressure or and insulin resistance

We are also currently developing a pipeline of products that support healthy aging and a long life expectancy. This includes solutions for inflammation as well as liver and intestinal health. The goal is to address chronic conditions early, enabling people to maintain their health and quality of life as they age.

**European Business:** Certmedica is already active in 40 countries. What are your plans for further international expansion?

**Dr. Marcus Furch:** Our international strategy focuses on high-growth markets like

Mexico, China, and Brazil, where we see significant potential for our products. By 2025, we want to open up new regions, including many countries in the ASEAN region following successful product approval. Partnerships are key to this growth. We work closely with specialized distributors who understand the unique needs of their local markets. This approach allows us to adapt our products and marketing strategies for maximum impact.

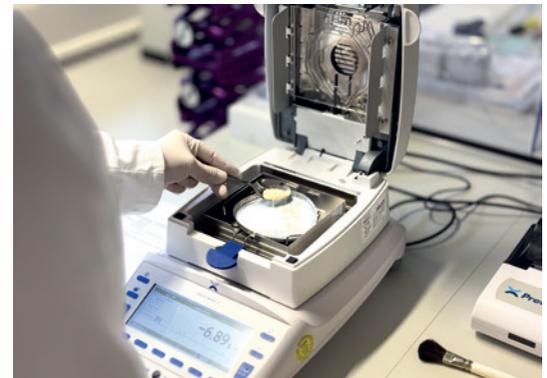
**European Business:** Digital tools seem to play an increasingly important role in

Certmedica's strategy. How do these innovations benefit your customers?

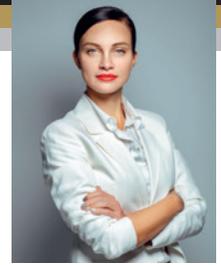
**Dr. Marcus Furch:** Digitization is transforming healthcare, and Certmedica is part of this shift. For example, our My-formoline app provides users with personalized support for a range of lifestyle changes, including an entertaining knowledge base and quizzes, as well as diet and exercise recommendations. This enhances treatment adherence and also empowers users to take charge of their health. We are also leveraging digital platforms for clinical research to streamline the recruitment of study participants. These ensure better compliance through features like teleconsultations and real-time tracking of patient behaviors. These tools are not only about convenience, but they represent a new way of integrating healthcare into daily life, making it more accessible and effective. Ultimately, our mission is to empower people to take control of their health, and I believe Certmedica is on a path to achieving that on a global scale.



In-house laboratory at Magnolienweg: the heart of innovation

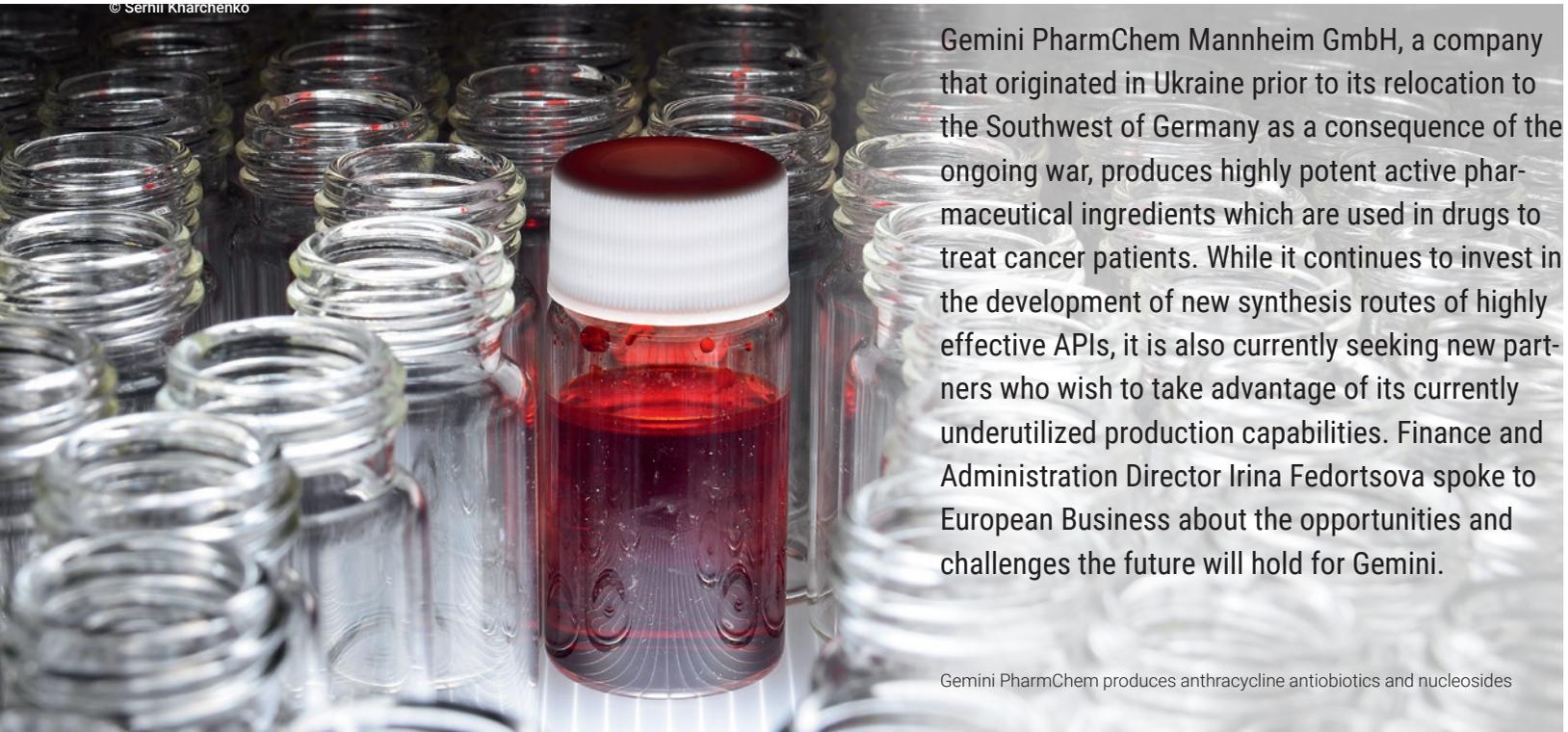


A laboratory test featuring the polyglucosamine L112 raw material



# “We need a level playing field for pharmaceuticals in Europe!”

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Gemini PharmChem Mannheim GmbH, a company that originated in Ukraine prior to its relocation to the Southwest of Germany as a consequence of the ongoing war, produces highly potent active pharmaceutical ingredients which are used in drugs to treat cancer patients. While it continues to invest in the development of new synthesis routes of highly effective APIs, it is also currently seeking new partners who wish to take advantage of its currently underutilized production capabilities. Finance and Administration Director Irina Fedortsova spoke to European Business about the opportunities and challenges the future will hold for Gemini.

Gemini PharmChem produces anthracycline antibiotics and nucleosides

**European Business:** Almost 20 years after it first began operations in Ukraine, your company is looking back at an eventful corporate history – including its move to Southwestern Germany.

**Irina Fedortsova:** Originally, our production facilities were located in Eastern Ukraine which was invaded by Russian forces in 2014. Our former plant there now lies in ruins. The untenable security situation decided us to move elsewhere. Luckily, Synbias Pharma AG, the owner of 100% of our shares who also covers the business development and sales sides of our organization, found and acquired the produc-

tion site of a former chemical company in Mannheim, Germany, which had gone into bankruptcy. The facilities there proved ideal for the production of our active pharmaceutical ingredients, as many measures for groundwater protection and pollution reduction were already in place.

**European Business:** What are some of the main products of Gemini PharmChem?

**Irina Fedortsova:** We produce highly potent active pharmaceutical ingredients which we supply to companies that use them to manufacture the final dosage forms of medicines administered to pa-

tients. In 2019, we started production of Doxorubicin hydrochloride, an anthracycline antibiotic which is now listed as an essential medicine by the World Health Organization. One year later, we began

antibiotics portfolio to include three more active pharmaceutical ingredients: Idarubicin hydrochloride which is used for treating multiple myeloma, non-Hodgkin's lymphoma and breast cancer

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“We are currently working on developing processes for new molecules which may hold great promise for highly effective new cancer treatments.”

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to produce another anthracycline antibiotic, Epirubicin hydrochloride. Both are used in a variety of cancer treatments, including soft-tissue sarcomas, childhood solid tumors, aggressive lymphomas and breast cancer. Since then, we have expanded our anthracycline

as well as Valrubicin for bladder cancer treatment and Pirarubicin which is used to treat a wide variety of tumors. Since 2021, we have also been producing Nelarabine, a nucleoside for treating T-cell lymphoblastic leukemia and lymphoma. All of these active phar-

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Gemini PharmChem's APIs are produced in state-of-the-art facilities in Mannheim, Germany

© Serhii Kharchenko



Gemini PharmChem is proud of never having failed a single audit

© Serhii Kharchenko



The company relocated to Baden-Württemberg as a result of the war in Ukraine

maceutical ingredients have since been granted GMP approval by the European Medicines Agency.

**European Business:** Where do you see the greatest potential for future growth?

**Irina Fedortsova:** Our dedicated research and development team is currently working on developing the synthesis routes for new molecules which may hold great promise for highly effective new cancer treatments. The development and approval processes in our industry are exceptionally long, however, and often take 4 or 5 years, which is a major obstacle for an innovative mid-sized company like Gemini. This is why we are currently also exploring additional business opportunities: On the basis of our proven track record of reliably producing highly complex active pharmaceutical ingredients at the highest quality standards in the world, we are currently seeking collaboration with other pharmaceutical com-

panies, as our production capacities are currently underutilized and we could easily more than double our production output.

**“We are asking for a level playing field, so that innovative European pharmaceutical companies can thrive again and continue to produce the cutting-edge medicines patients need.”**

**European Business:** What was the greatest challenge you faced in recent years?

**Irina Fedortsova:** The Covid-19 pandemic was disastrous for our company, as not only the entire pharmaceuticals industry, but also virtually all regulatory bodies focused their complete attention on finding cures and vaccines for the disease that essentially shut down the world – and rightly so. For Gemini, however, this meant even longer delays in the market entry processes of our products, which in turn led to cash-flow gaps for our parent company Synbias. Luckily, FPP Asset Man-

agement, a venture capital firm with a clear focus on acquiring distressed assets with significant opportunities for future growth,

saw the potential of our company and decided to invest.

**European Business:** What do you think are some of the drivers and obstacles for the future success of Gemini?

**Irina Fedortsova:** The standards we observe at our facilities in Germany are the highest in the world, and Gemini is proud of never having failed a single audit in the process after final receiving of GMP approval. However, this also means that we are being incessantly undercut by competitors from China and India who have far lower production costs and



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produce at much lower environmental and safety standards. We are not arguing for trade barriers or excessive subsidies. What we are asking for is a level playing field, so that innovative European pharmaceutical companies can thrive again and continue to produce and develop the cutting-edge medicines patients need.



# Leading the Charge in Bavarian Emergency Services

What began in 1985 with a single ambulance and a bold vision has evolved into one of Munich's most indispensable rescue service providers. The AICHER GROUP GmbH & Co. KG specializes in patient transport, emergency rescue, and large-scale event medical support, managing everything from everyday emergencies to the bustling Oktoberfest's medical needs. In this interview, Peter Aicher, founder and CEO, shares the company's journey and offers insights into the challenges behind their success. He reveals how digitalization, sustainability, and innovation are shaping their path forward.



Efficiency in motion: The Aicher Group's mobility service ensures smooth travel assistance for thousands of passengers daily at Munich Airport



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**European Business:** Mr. Aicher, your company has an impressive 40-year history. Could you share the milestones that have defined its journey?

**Peter Aicher:** We began operations on December 2, 1985, at a time when private ambulance and rescue services were unheard of in Bavaria. The major players, such as the Bavarian Red Cross, opposed us fiercely. Overcoming these challenges required persistence; we went through 47 legal battles, winning 46 of them. These victories were crucial, as they allowed us to secure contracts with health insurance providers. The journey was anything but smooth. At the beginning, authorities imposed hurdles like prohibiting our ambulances from using blue lights, which made our operations significantly harder. We fought these restrictions in

court and eventually succeeded. The 1990s marked a turning point when we expanded into emergency rescue services. By consistently delivering high-quality services, we gained trust and grew into one of Munich's largest providers, offering services like event medical support for the Oktoberfest.

**European Business:** How is your company structured today, and what can you share about your team and turnover?

**Peter Aicher:** We've grown significantly, employing around 1,200 staff members today. During the pandemic, our workforce even expanded to 2,700, as we took on large-scale responsibilities, such as managing 44 COVID-19 testing centers and operating four vaccination hubs, including Germany's second-largest center in Munich. In terms of turnover, we generate

between 30 and 50 million euros annually. What makes us unique is the close-knit, family-oriented structure of the company. Decisions are made quickly, and everyone – from mechanics to administration—is aligned with our mission. For example, our in-house mechanics ensure our vehicles are operational around the clock, contributing significantly to our efficiency.

**European Business:** How do you address issues like staff shortages and the increasing demands on your services?

**Peter Aicher:** Staff shortages, especially for paramedics, remain a pressing challenge. This year, we initiated our largest training cohort with 19 apprentices, yet retention is difficult due to Munich's high living costs, competition, and the job's demands. A significant

issue is the misuse of ambulances for non-urgent cases, which strains our resources. Additionally, violence and disrespect toward emergency responders are rising concerns. Tackling these challenges will require stronger legislative measures and societal change.

**European Business:** Digitalization and AI are transforming many industries. How has your company embraced these technologies?

**Peter Aicher:** We've embraced digitalization fully. Our processes, from patient data management to operational coordination, are digitized, making us more efficient. For instance, during the COVID-19 crisis, we quickly scaled operations, implementing digital systems to manage large testing and vaccination centers. However, there's still a lack of integration with hospitals and clinics, which creates inefficiencies. Regarding AI, we're exploring its potential for optimizing resource allocation and predicting service demands. While I personally lean on traditional tools like my trusty notebook, our younger team members drive the adoption of cutting-edge technologies, ensuring the company remains at the forefront of innovation.

**European Business:** Sustainability is becoming increasingly important. How is this reflected in your operations?

**Peter Aicher:** Sustainability is a core focus for us, both envi-

ronmentally and socially. Operationally, we've made significant strides, such as transitioning to eco-friendly vehicles and optimizing logistics to reduce fuel consumption. At the same time, our social responsibility has been evident in times of crisis. During the refugee crisis, we provided round-the-clock medical screenings at Munich Central Station, assisting thousands of refugees daily. Similarly, during the pandemic, our ability to mobilize and provide large-scale testing and vaccination services highlighted our commitment to public health and community resilience.

**European Business:** What are your future plans and vision for the company?

**Peter Aicher:** Stability and healthy growth are our top priorities. We're committed to expanding our services only where we can meet the demand without compromising quality. For instance, we've recently secured a contract in Duisburg for six new ambulances, which will help extend our reach. Long-term, my vision is to transition the company into a sustainable model, possibly a foundation, similar to the Steiger Foundation. This would ensure the company's legacy and protect the jobs of our employees. Personally, I'm also planning to step back from day-to-day operations, focusing on strategic decisions to ensure that the next generation has the tools and support they need to lead the company into the future.

State-of-the-art rescue vehicles stand as a testament to Aicher Group's commitment to emergency care



The Aicher Group's medical team ensures safety and care for millions of festival attendees every year



The Aicher Group delivers top-tier medical support for major sporting events like 1860 Munich games



Aicher Group's specialized team redefines passenger assistance services at Munich Airport



Your health, our priority: The Aicher Group ensures every runner is in safe hands during the SportScheck RUN





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# Powering a Sustainable Future



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Keeping the lights on: Stadtwerke Frankfurt (Oder) employs 90 people to deliver its mission of providing reliable and sustainable energy solutions to the local community

The city of Frankfurt (Oder) is located in eastern Germany near the Polish border, and has a population of around 60,000 residents. In common with many German cities, essential services like electricity, gas and heating are supplied by a municipal utility company. Stadtwerke Frankfurt (Oder) GmbH operates under this distinctly German model which promotes an independent approach to energy generation, management and supply. In an interview with European Business, Managing Director Torsten Röglin describes how this model allows for a more personalized energy provision, emphasizing sustainability and customer engagement.

**European Business:** Mr. Röglin, what is the core mission of Stadtwerke Frankfurt (Oder)?

**Torsten Röglin:** The core mission of Stadtwerke Frankfurt (Oder) is to provide reliable, sustainable and affordable energy solutions to our

community. We operate a comprehensive energy supply system, including a district heating network, electricity, and gas supply. Our focus is on integrating renewable energy sources and minimizing our carbon footprint, as well as reducing costs for our clients.



© MAN

The thermal power plant: Converted from coal to more climate-friendly natural gas, it provides affordable electricity for the city of Frankfurt (Oder) and the surrounding region

**European Business:** Can you share your previous background and experience?

**Torsten Röglin:** I joined the company in 2019 after spending approximately 20 years with the major energy player E.ON, where I worked in various capacities, including energy trading and network management. My technical background as a nuclear technician gives me a unique perspec-

tive on the energy sector, allowing me to understand the complexities of energy generation and distribution. However, one of the key motivations was my desire to engage more closely with clients and the community.

**European Business:** How does Stadtwerke Frankfurt (Oder) differentiate itself from larger energy companies?



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**Torsten Röglin:** One significant advantage of being a municipally/privately-owned utility company is our proximity to customers. Unlike larger corporations that may struggle to connect with their customer base, we can engage directly with our community. If a customer has a question or a concern, I can walk out of the door and speak to them directly. This close relationship fosters trust and allows us to tailor our services to meet the specific needs of our customers.

**European Business:** What strategic goals have you pursued since taking on your role?

**Torsten Röglin:** One of my primary goals has been to transition away from coal and reduce our CO<sub>2</sub> footprint. In 2018, we decided to replace our coal-fired combined heat and power plant with a gas-powered facility. This transition was a significant step towards sustainability, and the new plant was inaugurated in 2022. Since then, it has been operating successfully, providing

reliable energy, heat, and power while minimizing environmental impact.

**European Business:** How do you address the challenges posed by energy supply volatility?

**Torsten Röglin:** The volatility in the price of energy, especially due to geopolitical factors, has been a challenge. However, we are committed to ensuring a stable energy supply for our customers. Our gas-powered facility allows us to provide energy consistently while we develop smaller, decentralized energy solutions to enhance resilience and sustainability.

**European Business:** What role does customer engagement play in your operations?

**Torsten Röglin:** We are actively promoting solar energy solutions for our customers. For homeowners, we offer tailored photovoltaic systems that can be paired with battery storage and electric vehicle charging stations. Our goal is to empower residents to generate

their own energy and contribute to a sustainable future.

**European Business:** How does Stadtwerke Frankfurt (Oder) approach digital transformation?

**Torsten Röglin:** Digital transformation is a critical aspect of our strategy. The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated our digital initiatives, enabling us to streamline operations and enhance customer service. We are also working towards becoming a competitive metering service provider, which is essential for optimizing energy supply and demand.

**European Business:** What are your plans for the future?

**Torsten Röglin:** Looking ahead, we aim to further integrate renewable energy sources into our portfolio. We are exploring projects related to geothermal energy and heat pumps, which will play a vital role in our transition to a greener energy landscape. Additionally, we are committed to community engagement and ensuring that

our services align with the needs of our residents.

**European Business:** How do you envision the role of Stadtwerke in the broader energy landscape?

**Torsten Röglin:** Municipal utilities providers like ours are essential for the energy transition in Germany. We have the local knowledge and customer relationships that larger corporations may lack. Our commitment to sustainability and community engagement positions us as key players in the future energy landscape, ensuring that we can adapt to changing demands.

The German model: Locally embedded utility providers, or Stadtwerke, promote a high level of energy autonomy for their cities and encourage strong customer involvement



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# “Turkish Flexibility and German Virtues Propelled Us to Market Leadership!”

Among many more, LY Holding provides floor covering services for a variety of industries

LY-Holding GmbH consists of close to a dozen individual companies which provide high-quality cleaning and support services for many of the world’s major tire manufacturers. CEO Aziz Yüzer explained to European Business how his company grew from its humble beginnings in southern Germany into a truly global enterprise which employs more than 2,200 people today.

**European Business:** Mr. Yüzer, LY-Holding GmbH has been providing a wide variety of services for the tire industry for many years and consists of close to a dozen individual companies with distinct service portfolios. What would you say is the main focus of your daily business?

**Aziz Yüzer:** By and large, we are experts in automated tire mold cleaning and related fields. Thus, our holding company also comprises many individual firms which provide systematic cleaning services for reusable contain-

ers and produce dry ice for use in relevant cleaning procedures. Besides, we also offer rubber sealing and assembly services as well as high-quality bladders for heating presses, while our extensive expertise and experience allow us to develop and manufacture special machines and automation solutions for the industries we are active in. Additionally, we provide tailor-made repair services for tire manufacturers and we also trade in steel and construction elements so that we can support our partners and customers as holistically as possible.

**European Business:** Why do your clients prefer to outsource these services to LY-Holding instead of conducting them in-house?

**Aziz Yüzer:** Tire manufacturers focus on developing and producing high-quality tires – that’s what they want to devote their attention and resources to. The cleaning and support services we provide are necessary so they can achieve these aims; at the same time, they are clearly of secondary importance to them. They want to have as little to do with these tasks as possible, which is why

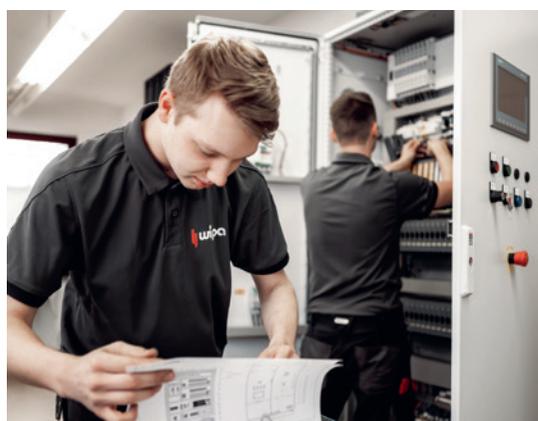
they were looking for an effective partner that can provide these services in a reliable fashion and consistently at a high quality. LY-Holding has been very successful in developing great expertise in this field and has attained a resilient leadership position in the market.

**European Business:** How have you been able to achieve this status?

**Aziz Yüzer:** We continuously improve the technologies we have invented and never cease



Recently, LY-Holding has been able to develop a laser system for tire mold cleaning procedures



WIPA, a subsidiary of LY-Holding provides automation solutions

## LY-Holding GmbH

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to come up with new ones. At first, the cleaning services we offered largely relied on manual labor. Over the years, we were able to automate many of them. Now, we have successfully developed a new laser system for which we were granted a patent and which allows us to serve our customers in an even more comprehensive way than before. Besides, from our humble beginnings in the Odenwald region of southern Germany, we quickly expanded our operations globally and are active in virtually all major markets in the world today – from Indonesia and Turkey to Mexico and Brazil. Our customers boast truly global operations networks as well – and thus need a partner who can support them with an equally global approach.

**European Business:** In spite of your successful automation innovations, LY-Holding currently employs approximately 2,200 people – in which way is your company exposed to the challenges that come with the wide-spread skilled labor shortage most European

companies have had to face for many years?

**Aziz Yüzer:** Undoubtedly, this is one of the major challenges we are currently confronted with. One particularly problematic impediment we encounter in this context lies in the extraordinarily stringent and cumbersome immigration procedures we have to deal with, primarily in Germany. For instance, we employ a great number of highly skilled engineers and computer programmers at our plant in Turkey who we would like to transfer to our company headquarters in Germany. All of them easily fulfill the requisite legal requirements, but it takes several months to obtain appointments for them at the foreigners' registration offices in Germany or the German consulates abroad. At the same time, these people's skills are desperately needed here – and our company is just one example of this major problem that virtually all mid-sized organizations across the country face every day. What is so frustrating is that essentially, all the laws needed to alleviate this situation

are in place, but navigating the bureaucratic requirements still takes so much needless time and effort. When I had a chance to speak to the German Chancellor a few months back, I made a point of raising this issue with him, because it is tremendously important – not just for us, but for the German economy and its opportunities for future growth as a whole.

**European Business:** Founded in 1987 by your Turkish family and a German partner, LY-Holding has been a multicultural endeavor from the very beginning – in what ways has this perspective shaped your company?

**Aziz Yüzer:** The owner of our local newspaper once described us as a match made in heaven: From the start, we were able to build upon German engineering and business virtues as well as a Turkish sense of flexibility and customer orientation. Even though our company has

grown substantially since those early days, we have consistently maintained strong horizontal-organizational structures so that we can quickly adapt to new market developments and untapped customer needs. This customer-centric approach has been of pivotal importance for our success and will continue to be so in the years to come.



Cleaning with dry ice has become much more environmentally friendly thanks to recent innovations spearheaded by LY-Holding



Our employees are our most important asset, who support our hotel vision



Alpi, the Alpenland Service Robot – Technology meets personalized service



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# People First, Always

In Austria's competitive tourism market, Alpenland Resort in St. Johann im Pongau is charting a unique path. The American-owned hotel prioritizes year-round employment, career development, and innovative work models, showing that putting employees first can tackle the industry's toughest challenges. From service robots assisting staff to fostering loyalty through growth, Alpenland is redefining Alpine hospitality. In this interview, Assistant General Manager Sarah Wenghofer discusses their people-centered philosophy and what sets them apart.

**European Business:** The Alpenland Resort has an interesting ownership structure. Mrs. Wenghofer, can you tell us about its history?

**Sarah Wenghofer:** The hotel was founded in 1978 and was bought by an American family just a few years later. We're quite unique in that we're the only property they own in Austria. While the ownership is American, we here in Austria are the ones running the day-to-day operations. The past six years have been particularly transformative for us, with new management implementing significant changes.

**European Business:** What makes your approach to hospitality different from other hotels?

**Sarah Wenghofer:** Our employees are our most important capital. We strongly believe that the hotel's vision and philosophy must be lived by our employees – management can make all the plans they want, but if employees don't

embody these values, it's meaningless. We focus on creating clear structures and involving our employees in everything we do. Unlike many hotels in the region, we offer primarily year-round positions rather than seasonal work. This helps create stronger employee loyalty. What's particularly important to us is that we don't just look at our staff as workers

– we look at their individual qualities and potential, and then invest in their development. We actively encourage and even require further education and training.

**European Business:** How are you addressing the industry-wide challenge of staff shortages?





Restaurant Pongauer Stube – Alpine charm with modern hospitality



Guest Room – Elegant design with cozy Alpine flair

**Sarah Wenghofer:** Money is important, but it's only a short-term motivator. We focus on creating meaningful work experiences and clear career perspectives. The tourism industry often has this outdated mindset of 'this is how we've always done things,' especially regarding working hours and conditions. We're trying different working models because while tourism will always involve weekend and evening work, there are ways to make it more attractive. We need to show young people that there are real career opportunities in this industry.

**European Business:** You're operating in a highly competitive market. What sets Alpenland apart?

**Sarah Wenghofer:** We're quite unique in that we're a timeshare property – about 60% of our occupancy comes from timeshare guests. This makes us one of the most international hotels in St. Johann, with guests from all over the world. We have 140 rooms accommodating up to 300 guests, and while we're not primarily focused on wellness like many other hotels, we concentrate on nature, sports, and leisure activities. Our guest mix is also quite diverse – we have traditional holiday guests, business travelers for our extensive seminar facilities, and our timeshare guests who often use our hotel as a base to explore all of Austria.

**European Business:** What role does digitalization play in your operations?

**Sarah Wenghofer:** We've digitalized much of our internal communication and processes, but we're very careful about how we implement technology. For example, we have a service robot, but it's designed to support our staff, not replace them. It carries plates so that our employees can spend more time with guests. In rural hospitality, digitalization is a sensitive topic – we can't just put up a check-in machine and close the reception because we'd lose that crucial personal contact with guests.

**European Business:** What's your vision for the future of tourism in the region?

**Sarah Wenghofer:** One of my personal passions is changing how we approach competition in rural areas. Instead of hotels trying to outdo each other, we need to focus on destination management. We need to market the destination as a whole, not just individual hotels. When you look at successful regions like Großarl, they've created a strong brand where no single property stands alone. This kind of collaboration could make the entire region more attractive, benefiting everyone in the long run. We already have tourism management, but what we really need is comprehensive destination management. This isn't about losing individual identity – quite the opposite. When we strengthen the destination as a whole, each hotel's unique character becomes even more valuable.





# Passionate About Sports Brands



The new CHRIS sports AG headquarters in Eschlikon



know how and speed since 1990

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“Digitalization is key for us. It allows our employees to focus more on customer interactions rather than getting bogged down by data management.”



Working and playing as a team: CHRIS sports is committed to nurturing a skilled and motivated workforce, which is crucial for maintaining high standards of service and innovation in the competitive sporting goods industry

Elite sport often celebrates individual success. But behind every winning performance is a team effort. Teamwork is also at the heart of CHRIS sports AG in Aadorf, Switzerland. The company may have started out as a one-man-show – founded in 1989 by self-confessed adrenaline junkie Chris Bättig in his parents’ garage – but today its success is entirely thanks to teamwork. Under the direction of Managing Director Andreas Guglielmo, CHRIS sports is a distributor of leading sports and lifestyle brands in the Swiss and Austrian markets. The company is expanding its business with their new shoe brand acquisition Allbirds in additional markets Germany, Italy and France, supported by a strong sales and logistic team in Salzburg and Frastanz.

Founded 35 years ago, CHRIS sports has evolved from a small distributor to a key player in the sporting goods industry, particularly in Switzerland and Austria. Andreas Guglielmo’s path to CHRIS sports is both unique and inspiring. “I started my journey in the sports industry quite spontaneously,” he shares. Guglielmo, originally from Italy, became acquainted with CHRIS sports through his involvement in a youth organization where he met Christian Bättig, the company’s founder. “What began as a casual

interest turned into a serious commitment, and now, 15 years later, I’m proud to lead this dynamic company,” he explains. He initially served as Chief Financial Officer for eleven years before stepping into his current role as Managing Director three years ago.

## An evolving portfolio

Under Andreas Guglielmo’s leadership, CHRIS sports has significantly expanded its portfolio and market reach. Initially focused on the Swiss market, the company has grown to include a variety



The nearly completed headquarters of Chris sports AG in Eschlikon: A state-of-the-art facility designed to enhance logistics and foster collaboration



The new logistics center features a state-of-the-art automated storage system, which is designed to optimize efficiency and streamline operations

of well-known brands, such as Rocky Mountain and Giro which are aimed at off-road cycling enthusiasts. "One of our major milestones was acquiring the distribution rights for Giro, which allowed us to tap into the winter sports market," Andreas Guglielmo notes. CHRIS sports has also diversified its offerings by adding New Balance to its portfolio, which has since become one of the top three brands in the sports and leisure footwear sector. Today, the company distributes over 30 leading brands covering a wide range of sporting activities.

#### **Making partners part of the team**

Andreas Guglielmo emphasizes the importance of long-term partnerships to the company's success, stating, "We pride ourselves on maintaining strong relationships with our suppliers and customers. Our success is built on trust and mutual support." This approach has allowed CHRIS sports to flourish even in competitive markets.

#### **Embracing digital transformation**

Another significant aspect of CHRIS sports' growth strategy

has been embracing digital transformation. The company has positioned itself as a pioneer in the industry by investing in digital tools to streamline operations and improve customer service. "Digitalization is key for us. It allows our employees to focus more on customer interactions rather than getting bogged down

**"Teamwork is at the heart of what we do; when our team collaborates effectively, we can innovate and respond to our customers' needs more swiftly."**

by data management," Andreas Guglielmo explains. Having been quick off the blocks in setting up B2B outlets for its retail partners, the company launched its first B2C online shop in 2020, and since then, it has expanded to six shops, with plans for two more in the near future. Never content to rest on its laurels, the continuous optimization of the e-commerce experience is one of CHRIS sports' priorities. "We want to ensure that our customers have easy access to product information and can place orders directly through our platforms

while enjoying high performance and stability," Andreas Guglielmo adds.

#### **Commitment to sustainability**

Sustainability is also a core value for CHRIS sports with environmentally friendly practices seen as playing an important role in the company's operations. "We

have invested in solar panels and district heat for our new building, ensuring that we can improve our footprint," Andreas Guglielmo notes. This commitment to sustainability aligns with the growing consumer demand for eco-friendly products and practices.

#### **Navigating challenges**

Despite its success, CHRIS sports has faced challenges, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic, which disrupted supply chains and altered consumer behaviour. Andreas Guglielmo acknowledges the difficulties but now looks

back on this time positively. "We learned valuable lessons during the pandemic about adaptability and resilience," he says. "Our diverse product range also helps mitigate the risks associated with ongoing market fluctuations.

#### **The future of CHRIS sports**

Looking ahead, Guglielmo is optimistic about the future of CHRIS sports. The company is in the process of relocating to new headquarters in Eschlikon, which will feature state-of-the-art logistics facilities, including an automated storage system. "This move is not just about improving our logistics; it's about positioning ourselves for future growth," he explains. The new facility will allow CHRIS sports to better serve its clients and expand its operations. Moreover, the company is exploring opportunities to act as a logistics hub for other brands, capitalizing on its established distribution network. "We believe there is potential to diversify our offerings further and serve a broader market," Andreas Guglielmo states in conclusion.

# Revolutionizing Airport Security with Innovation and Intelligence



A state-of-the-art security lane system, enhancing passenger flow and security at major airports

Jasper van Gend, Executive Director of Scarabee, a visionary leader driving innovation in airport security

Scarabee Systems & Technology B.V. is revolutionizing the airport security industry with its innovative solutions, including Smart Security Lanes, Baggage Software Solutions, and Self-Service BagDrop Systems. Known for enhancing the passenger experience, Scarabee blends cutting-edge technology to make air travel safer and more efficient. European Business spoke with Jasper van Gend, Executive Director, about the company's journey, its vision for the future, and the challenges it faces as it expands globally. From sustainability to digital transformation, Scarabee is paving the way for a smarter and more seamless airport experience.

**European Business:** Mr. Van Gend, can you provide an overview of Scarabee's history and key milestones?

**Jasper van Gend:** Scarabee was founded 36 years ago in Rotterdam by Michael Tan and Twan Schellekens. Initially, the company focused on providing products for Schiphol Airport, particularly in the area of baggage handling. Over the years, Scarabee developed into a provider of advanced self-service baggage drop-off systems, automated check-ins, and smart security lanes to optimize passenger flow. The passenger experience has always been a top

priority. We integrated innovative technologies like CT scanners for 3D baggage screening to enhance security processes. These milestones highlight our commitment to staying at the forefront of the aviation security industry.

**European Business:** What is the structure of Scarabee, and how is it organized?

**Jasper van Gend:** Scarabee is owned by the majority shareholder Daifuku Co. Ltd., a global leader in material handling systems. Our headquarter is located in Hoofddorp, the Netherlands, with operations in Germany, Japan, and the

USA. The company has around 150 employees worldwide, and is experiencing rapid growth, with revenue more than doubling in 2023 compared to 2022. This global presence allows us to serve key airports and clients across different regions, providing tailored solutions for the aviation sector.

**European Business:** Can you describe Scarabee's product portfolio and innovations?

**Jasper van Gend:** Our product portfolio includes smart security lanes, baggage handling systems, and self-service bag drop solu-

tions. We combine mechanical components with cutting-edge digital technology to improve efficiency and optimize the flow of passengers, for example, we integrate state-of-the-art 3D CT scanners for carry-on baggage screening, as well as e.g., effective predictive- and preventive maintenance systems using AI. We also ensure that our products pass rigorous Factory Acceptance Tests (FAT) and Site Acceptance Tests (SAT). We are certified both in Europe (ECAC) as well as in the US (TSA) with various scanner suppliers, such as e.g., Smiths Detection. We often act as prime contractor for the whole



Technicians working on the self-service bag drop system, streamlining baggage handling at modern airports

smart security lane, handling all the engineering, assembly, and services ourselves. The result is a robust and reliable product lineup that meets the needs of modern airports.

**European Business:** What types of customers does Scarabee serve, and which regions are you active in?

**Jasper van Gend:** Scarabee serves major airports worldwide, primarily focusing on Level 1 airports, with more than 25 million passengers per year, and Level 2 airports, with more than 10 million passengers. Our portfolio spans international markets, with a significant presence in Germany and the USA. Approximately 80% of our revenue comes from exports. We have a strong foothold in key regions, including Europe, North America, and Japan, supported by our majority stakeholder Daifuku and strategic partnerships.

**European Business:** How does Scarabee manage its export activities and international operations?

**Jasper van Gend:** Export activities account for around 80% of our revenue, with a strong presence in markets like e.g., Ger-



Engineers assembling and testing advanced baggage handling systems to improve airport operations

many and the USA. We operate in the Benelux region from our Hoofddorp office, and we have a dedicated sales team in Munich for the DACH region. In the USA, Daifuku handles distribution and servicing for our products. Notable projects include the installation of security lanes at Houston Airport, as well as projects in Denver, Portland, and San Francisco. Our products are increasingly in demand as airports worldwide look for innovative solutions to optimize passenger flow while adopting the highest security standards and regulations.

**European Business:** What is Scarabee's vision for the future,



# SCARABEE

TECHNOLOGY AT HEART

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Scarabee's headquarters where innovation in airport security solutions takes shape

tionally, we are looking to expand into related markets, such as logistics, where we see opportunities to leverage our technologies for further growth. Sustainability is central to our strategy – we design products with long life-cycles. For example, our lanes at Schiphol Airport have been in operation for over nine years and through refurbishment of mainly wear and tear parts, we can extend these lifetimes significantly. We focus on energy efficiency, low maintenance and conduct regular sustainability audits. Internally, Scarabee maintains a professional, yet startup-like culture with an emphasis on enthusiasm, creativity and inclusivity. We offer a flexible work environment and have a zero-tolerance policy for discrimination, ensuring that everyone feels valued. Personally, I'm driven by the opportunity to implement Daifuku's goals while having the freedom to shape Scarabee's future. I feel responsible not only for the company's growth but also for our employees and their families. It's about creating a culture where people are respected. This human approach is something I'm passionate about – it's not just about business success, but about building an environment where everyone can thrive.

especially in terms of sustainability and company culture?

**Jasper van Gend:** Looking ahead, our vision is to continue providing intelligent, future-proof solutions for the aviation industry and meeting the highest regulatory standards. We want to optimize the passenger journey, not just in airports but also in adjacent industries like logistics. We are exploring new products from Daifuku, such as automated guided vehicles (AGVs) for baggage handling, which we plan to introduce to the European market. Our expansion efforts focus on growing in Europe, the Middle East, and Eastern Europe. Addi-



# The American denim dream made in Tilburg



The head office in Tilburg provides the perfect backdrop for the company's stories about denim casual fashion

The story of the denim-casual brand Petrol Industries B.V. actually began with leather belts, but the demand for trendy and casual menswear soon led to the launch of a men's collection. The corporate story didn't stop there, as Petrol Industries has turned into a popular Dutch brand that is sold in 2,700 shops throughout Europe today. The adventures of the 'Petrol Man' now inspire men big and small, young and old – a brand for all those who love the call of freedom and adventure.

'Today we have become a strong pan-European brand. Our roots are in the Netherlands, but many people still think of us as an American company. When hearing the name Petrol Industries, the images of old cars and motorbikes driven by cool men come up,' says founder and CEO Elwin Flint. 'Our customers crave unforgettable tours and live life in the fast lane. That's the story we sell with our fashion. We have great products, but also a strong story behind them. Not many brands manage that, not even big international A-brands.' Elwin Flint

sees Petrol Industries primarily as a company with a strong DNA. 'We are denim-driven and the recognition value of our products is very high,' he says. 'In the coming years we want to communicate this DNA even more strongly

to the outside world. We focus on products that are authentic, and we also reflect these brand stories in our shop-in-shop sales areas and in our own shops.'

## From belt to men's fashion

Today, the supplier of belts has become a solid menswear company with a focus on jeans and casual fashion. 'The company has developed organically. I met Pedro van Zon, the co-founder, in

"We are an A brand at a B price."

2000. He had been selling leather belts since 1989. We quickly realized that the brand was well received in the market and had a huge potential, and so the idea



Petrol's customers are inspired by the stories of the 'Petrol Man' and his adventures

of adding menswear was born in 2008,' recalls Elwin Flint. Just two years later, a boys' collection was added and, due to the strong growth of Petrol Industries, the move across the border soon followed, with Elwin Flint primarily taking care of the men's clothing segment.



Cool guys in the mood for a big adventure – with clothing from Petrol Industries



Trendy, robust and hard-wearing – fashion for real boys



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### Strong bonds with customers

The CEO can point to impressive figures to describe the success of his company. There are currently some 2,700 sales outlets in Europe and over 20,000 m<sup>2</sup> of office and warehouse space at the main site in Tilburg alone. 'Our head office is certainly a nice calling card for our company, it is centrally located at the Tilburg motorway and is also a wonderful advertisement for passers-by. Customers who visit us are always impressed. This also documents that we are a strong brand indeed,' says Marketing Manager Martine Boerrigter, who worked for a major fashion brand before joining forces with Petrol Industries and has been strengthening the company's marketing activities in the past year. 'We are very proud of our success over

the past 35 years,' emphasizes Elwin Flint. 'The fashion market is in a constant state of ups and downs and is exposed to strong storms. But the enthusiasm of our employees has always carried

us through. We can react very quickly to trends and integrate them into our collections. So we follow trends and don't set our own trends. This has proved to be a good approach so far. We are still a very healthy company and have long-term relationships with manufacturers and customers alike. We only work with a few selected manufacturers who are

loyal to us and have grown with us.'

### Never out of stock

The same applies to the customer side. Petrol Industries sells its men's and boys' collections via three channels. The wholesale market was and is particularly important. 'The market recognizes us, also thanks to the good campaigns that show our DNA,' says Martine Boerrigter. 'We have recognizable collections for all men, including the still relatively new plus-size range, which has become an integral part of our

**"We are strong in storytelling. The adventures of the 'Petrol Man' are well known throughout Europe."**

collection recently. Retailers can reorder throughout the year so that we can replenish stock every week.' Petrol Industries now offers a good stock of NOOS (Never Out Of Stock) items. In addition, a summer and a winter collection are launched twice a year in three drops each. The new collections are also available in the company's own webshop, another

important sales channel in the B2C segment. 'The webshop is an important addition, but retail remains the most important sales channel for us,' says Elwin Flint. Today, next to the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, France, Italy, and Spain are among the company's strongest markets in terms of sales. 'We have a product and a name that sells equally well everywhere in Europe,' says Martine Boerrigter. 'We are an attractive brand and our customers do well with us. They are the ones who pass on our storytelling to the end customer.' The individual countries are served by 40 agents in Europe with showrooms. Petrol Industries has all the expertise in-house and the design also comes from the corporate headquarters in Tilburg. In the coming years, Petrol Industries will work even harder to publicize the brand and tell the story of the Petrol Man's adventures. Perhaps a shop in the land of denim fashion, the USA, will follow at some point. It is allowed to dream big after so many successful years in the market. The story will definitely continue.



# Pioneering the Digital Transformation of Industrial Auctions

From heavy machinery and industrial equipment to complete business inventories – TBAuctions has established itself as Europe’s largest B2B digital auction platform. By leveraging technology and data-driven insights, the company connects buyers and sellers across borders, making industrial asset transactions more efficient, transparent, and scalable. In this interview, Arno Hendrikse, Commercial Director for the Benelux and UK, reveals how digitalization, sustainability, and an evolving auction landscape are shaping the company’s growth strategy. He shares insights into TBAuctions’ business model, market leadership, and visions for the future.



Machine Auctions with precision, reliability, and efficiency – TBAuctions connects buyers and sellers across industries, ensuring high-value transactions for industrial equipment

**European Business:** Mr. Hendrikse, TBAuctions is known as Europe’s largest B2B digital auction platform. Can you give us an overview of the company’s history?

**Arno Hendrikse:** TBAuctions was formed through the merger of Troostwijk Auctions and BVA Auctions in 2018. Troostwijk was founded in 1930 in the Netherlands and went online in 2006. Since then, the company has expanded significantly through acquisitions, becoming a key player in the European auction market. Today, we are represented in 16

countries with a total of 9 brands, including Troostwijk, Surplex, and Klaravik. Since 2021, the company is owned by Castik Capital and backed by Summa Equity, which have supported our strategic growth.

**European Business:** You have been with the company for several years. What has been your career path at TBAuctions?

**Arno Hendrikse:** I joined the company in 2017 as Managing Director for the Netherlands, initially leading Troostwijk’s valuation and advisory unit. Over time,

I took on additional responsibilities, including overseeing sales and integrating BVA Auctions into the group. Since 2024, I have been responsible for the Benelux and UK markets as Commercial Director. This year, we switched to a regional structure: Europe is divided into the three regions Benelux & UK, Continental, and Scandinavia. This structure allows us to respond more effectively to local market needs.

**European Business:** What industries and products do you cover?

**Arno Hendrikse:** Our portfolio includes industrial equipment, heavy machinery, logistics equipment, vehicles, and machines for metal, wood, food, and plastic processing. Our largest verticals are heavy equipment, logistics, and industrial machinery. These categories include tractors, cranes, forklifts, and specialized machines for manufacturing. We use predictive algorithms to determine lot values, but ultimately, the market sets the price. Our commission-based model ensures that we always aim for the highest possible auction results.

**European Business:** How does TBAuctions acquire customers and sellers?

**Arno Hendrikse:** Each European country has a dedicated sales team that actively acquires sellers. We rely on networking,

process faster, more efficient, and scalable. The integration of our buyer and seller databases across brands has significantly increased transaction volumes. By leveraging AI and data-driven insights, we optimize auction results and ensure that transac-



Providing a seamless platform for global industrial asset auctions: From powerful construction machines to high-tech woodworking tools advertising, and recommenda-

tions to expand our client base.

Buyers and sellers are connected through our proprietary platform, Atlas, which we developed to optimize transactions. Over the years, we have acquired multiple companies to strengthen our market presence. A significant percentage of our transactions involve cross-border sales, allowing buyers and sellers to access international markets more efficiently.

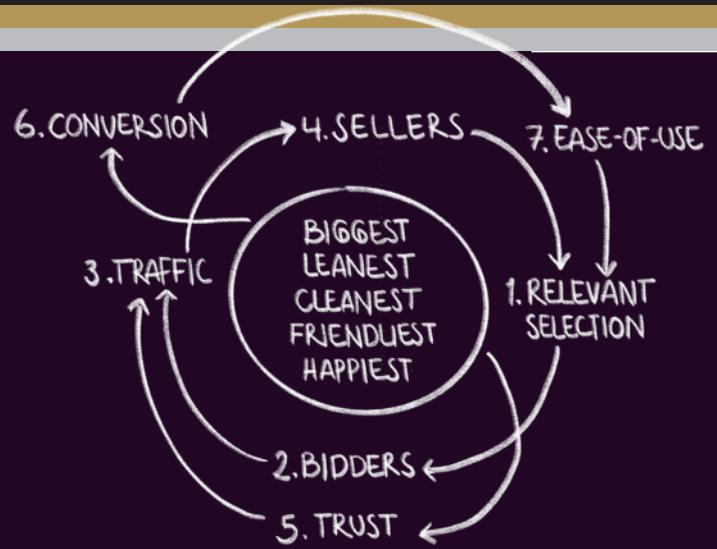
**European Business:** What role does digitalization play in your business?

**Arno Hendrikse:** We are a fully digital auction platform. Since 2006, all our auctions have been conducted online, making the

**European Business:** Sustainability is becoming increasingly important. How does TBAuctions contribute?

**Arno Hendrikse:** Our business inherently supports the circular economy by extending the lifecycle of machines. Many corporations and governments use our platform as part of their sustainability strategies. By enabling the reuse of industrial assets,

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With innovation at its core, TBAuctions' digital-first approach optimizes every step of the auction process, creating a dynamic and scalable ecosystem for buyers and sellers

we contribute to reducing waste and carbon footprints. Auctions provide a direct and efficient way to give machinery a second life, which is becoming even more relevant as companies focus on sustainability.

**European Business:** What are the key factors behind TBAuctions' success?

**Arno Hendrikse:** The success of our platform is driven by the large number of buyers and sellers we connect every day. With over 1,200 employees, we have built an extensive network across Europe. Our business model is scalable, allowing us to handle both large industrial auctions and single-item transactions. We continuously invest in M&A strategies and organic growth, enabling us

to expand while maintaining high service quality.

**European Business:** What are TBAuctions' future goals?

**Arno Hendrikse:** We have a three-year growth strategy in place. Our focus is shifting from acquisitions to organic growth, strengthening our market position and increasing transaction efficiency. We aim to make TBAuctions the first choice for businesses looking to buy or sell used machinery. By continuously enhancing our digital infrastructure and expanding our customer base, we are confident that we can achieve this goal.



Auktionshuset dab  
 British Medical Auctions  
 Auksjonen  
 Klaravik  
 Surplex  
 Troostwijk Auctions  
 PS Auction  
 Vavato

**TBAUCTIONS**



# Efficiency Meets Innovation: Redefining Municipal Management

Desyde B.V., a Dutch IT services and solutions provider, has carved a unique niche for itself by offering tailored solutions for municipal challenges, from parking management to logistics. Renowned for its modular systems inspired by Lego concepts, the company stands out for its adaptability and innovation. In a conversation with Director Ton van Puffelen, we explored Desyde's remarkable journey, its commitment to sustainability and its ambitious plans for future growth.

Founded in 1993, Desyde started as a small operation renting out expertise and quickly grew into a dynamic player in IT services and solutions. Initially focused on personnel services, the company soon ventured into product development. A key milestone was entering the flower bulb logistics market, managing 4,000 tulip varieties. A pivotal moment came at a trade fair, where the team identified an opportunity in parking management – a niche they have successfully developed ever since. Headquartered in Maarn, the Netherlands, Desyde employs 20 professionals and generates 2.5 million EUR in annual revenue. The company's growth is rooted in innovation, adaptability, and a team with decades of expertise.

## A Unique Portfolio and Expanding Client Base

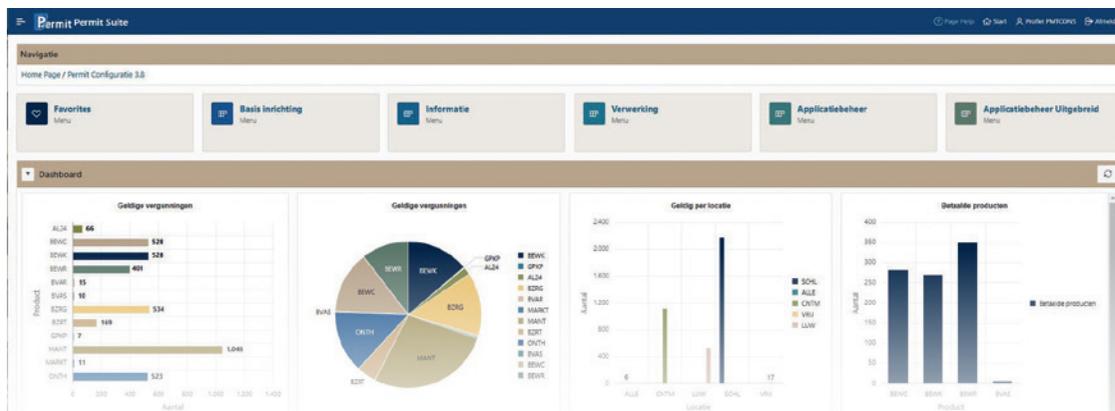
Desyde's portfolio reflects its versatility, from managing flower bulb logistics to offering tailored parking management solutions for municipalities. Using modular Lego Duplo concepts and progressing to more advanced Lego configurations, their solutions ensure flexibility, quick implementation, and scalability for clients. With 30 municipalities among its 180 municipal customers, Desyde's solutions are trusted across the Netherlands and Greece, its key export market. The company continues to explore opportunities to expand its reach regionally and internationally, leveraging its innovative approach

to meet the diverse needs of new markets.

## Vision, Sustainability, and Digital Transformation

Sustainability and digitalization are at the heart of Desyde's operations. Their modular software solutions are not only efficient but environmentally friendly, aligning with evolving customer demands. The integration of smart technologies enables real-time data analysis and cloud-based platforms, improving decision-making and operational efficiency for municipalities. Adapting their software to meet the diverse needs of clients remains a challenge, as does navigating regulatory and cultural differences in new markets. Nevertheless, Desyde's ability to

respond quickly and effectively sets them apart. Looking ahead, Desyde aims to grow its municipal customer base while preserving its familial, relaxed company culture. Participation in trade fairs and a focus on digital innovation continue to strengthen its market position. With a dedicated team, a commitment to sustainability, and clear future goals, Desyde is well-prepared to tackle the challenges of an increasingly interconnected world.



Insights through innovation: Desyde's advanced dashboard solutions provide municipalities with real-time data and analytics for efficient parking management



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