

SPECTRUM 2025



MGG
MÜLLER-GUTTENBRUNN
GROUP

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Dear readers!

The current geopolitical situation gives me pause for thought. When the powerful of this world threaten with tariffs, counter-tariffs and restrictions on the movement of goods, I have to ask myself the question: Do they realise the consequences?

I have already explained several times that excessive regulations and restrictions are not sustainable for the European recycling industry and our society. However, if a spiral of tariffs also starts to take effect, it will ultimately be the consumers who suffer the most. Because they will have to pay the higher prices - in all the countries affected.

The current global economic situation is also beginning to have an impact on European plastics recyclers. Many are struggling to survive, some have not made it, others will follow. I am therefore all the more proud of our team at MGG Polymers, which is responding to these challenges in difficult times with investments and further developments in a courageous, proactive and far-sighted manner.

We at Müller-Guttenbrunn have always been optimistic realists - and still are! That's why I believe that global developments can also be an opportunity for Europe. If we return to our old virtues and values - and, for example, process raw materials here instead of exporting them - I am convinced that Europe can play a part in the global concert, and even set the tone.

We recyclers will continue to do our job - the circular economy - as well as possible. And we at MGG will remain true to our tried and tested strategies: further developing innovative technologies to increase recycling depths. Improving material utilisation to give materials a second life. Developing creative recycling ideas to maintain added value. Invest boldly to operate sustainably!

In this issue, you will get a small insight into what has happened in our small, fine Müller-Guttenbrunn world in 2024. Enjoy browsing!

Yours
Mag. Christian Müller-Guttenbrunn
CEO



„Innovation, research and development have always been essential components of Müller-Guttenbrunn’s DNA.“

MGG joins PV recycling start-up.

The generation of green electricity from photovoltaic systems is a hot topic of our time. But what happens to PV modules that are getting on in years? The Mostviertel-based start-up company 2nd Cycle is addressing precisely this question and developing solutions for recycling. The Müller-Guttenbrunn Group is on board as a business angel and supporter of this young, innovative company.

The Müller-Guttenbrunn Group acquired a stake in the Amstetten-based start-up company „2nd Cycle“ at the start of 2024. Together with the well-known Austrian business angel Michael Altrichter, the Group is supporting the young founders in the development of automated upcycling systems for used photovoltaic modules.

„If you don’t move with the times, you’ll be left behind. Innovation, research and development have always been essential components of Müller-Guttenbrunn’s DNA. Since our company was founded, we have been known as early adopters and innovative technology pioneers,“ says MGG CEO Christian Müller-Guttenbrunn, explaining this step. Ever since the company was founded, Müller-Guttenbrunn

has not shied away from being the first company in the industry to recognize, take up and establish new topics.

Around 3 million PV modules are installed every day.

The Mostviertel recycling pioneers at MGG see huge potential in the recycling of photovoltaic systems. Every day, around three million PV collectors are installed worldwide, which will reach the end of their product life in 15 to 20 years. „Another important factor is the rapidly advancing technological development of photovoltaic modules. Increasing module performance makes the replacement or upgrade of existing PV modules economically attractive for many system operators. True to the motto: more output from the same area,“ reports Christian Müller-Guttenbrunn.

In Germany alone, 50 million modules are forecast to be returned each year by 2030. Someone has to take care of this recyclable material. This is precisely why the Müller-Guttenbrunn Group is involved in the Lower Austrian start-up company 2nd Cycle as an investor and cooperation partner. MGG supports the new company with economic participation, with searching a suitable company location

and with different kinds of networking in the photovoltaic industry.

One of the first Austrian FlexCos.

The choice of corporate form also matches the start-up's innovative spirit. This is because the company was founded in anticipation of the introduction of the new FlexCo company form in Austria on January 1, 2024. Among other things, this structure can be used to create Enterprise Value Shares (UWA) for the design of a future employee participation program.

What is behind it? Five young mechanical engineers are currently developing an automated upcycling system for used photovoltaic modules. In future, the system will check the functionality of modules and analyze which parts of the modules are still functional and which are not. The analysis is carried out by cleaning the modules and checking the metal frames and glass plates for cracks or bubbles. In addition, technical test procedures such as electroluminescence are used to show which modules are still working and which are not. At the end of the process, a switch is used to decide which modules have sufficient efficiency and can be returned to the cycle (re-use) and which need to be recycled. And this is another area where MGG can get involved, as MGG Metran has been working for some time on how to separate and recycle non-reusable PV modules in a meaningful way.

MGG and Michael Altrichter as business angels.

„The founding team is top-notch and complete. It consists of experts in mechanical engineering, automation technology, technical physics and data analysis and cooperates with renowned research institutions,“ explains Michael Altrichter, who is also a co-founder of the young company. An important aspect for success will also be the corresponding network. For example, contact is being sought with large plant operators in order to cooperate. The currently still high costs for the disposal of PV modules are the main argument in favor of 2nd Cycle – probably one of the top arguments for the success of the new company.

The founding team of Simon and Michael Prüller, Gerald Eichler, Simon Schauppenlehner and Jakob Anger is pursuing an ambitious goal: by 2031, around eight percent of the EU-wide return flow of used PV modules is to be processed in 20 upcycling plants, which could save around 200,000 tons of PV waste and prevent 75 million tons of CO2 emissions. Christian Müller-Guttenbrunn finds this an exciting prospect: „An idea that not only makes economic sense, but also makes a decisive contribution to climate protection. We are happy to be involved, because in our eyes this is real sustainability!“

You can find more information about 2nd Cycle at: www.2ndcycle.at ■



„An idea that not only makes economic sense, but also makes a decisive contribution to climate protection. We are happy to be involved.“

Flexibility, humor and a broad back!

Astrid Fixl has been responsible for invoice control at the Müller-Guttenbrunn Group for 22 years. She also contributes her experience to purchasing contracts, invoicing and drop shipments. An exciting insight into the supposedly dry subject of administration.

Ms. Fixl, what motivated you to apply for a job at Müller-Guttenbrunn? And: What was your professional career like up to your current position?

ASTRID FIXL: I grew up in Schwertberg, trained as a retail saleswoman and then worked in the office at Hödlmayr. After I got married, I moved to Amstetten and started working in the office at Farben Wahl. Once my son was old enough, I wanted to work more hours, but that wasn't possible with this employer. That's why I started looking for a new job and my friend Dagmar Schartmüller, who had already been working at Müller-Guttenbrunn for several years at the time, gave me the tip to apply. What can I say? I started on May 21, 2002 and have now been with MGG for 22 years and am still happy! And when the time comes, I'm looking forward to retiring here.

What has changed since the early days?

FIXL: In my early days, my workplace was in the scheduling department. Now I'm in the same office as the Production Manager at MGG Metrec and we work well together. A lot of things work through the „short official channels“, so to speak.

What does this work look like? What specific tasks does your job involve and what challenges do you encounter most often?

FIXL: I am responsible for invoice control at MGG Metrec and Metran. The incoming invoices are first indexed in the accounting department and then come to me. I check that the company address is correct and that they match the corresponding delivery bills. I then allocate the invoices to the individual companies and departments or release them directly if I know what they are and whether the invoice amount matches.

You certainly have a good insight into the entire MGG Group and know exactly who is responsible for what.

FIXL: After 22 years, you naturally know who is responsible for which areas. The further development of the companies

has made things a little more complex than they used to be. It helped me a lot that I also stood in at the cash desk at the beginning and was therefore more directly involved in the daily routine. My area of responsibility also includes drawing up the purchasing contracts for all domestic and foreign material purchases for MGG Metran as well as foreign purchases for MGG Metrec. This also includes drop shipments.

What are drop shipments?

FIXL: In principle, these are all commercial transactions where the material does not come to our plant. For example, when a buyer purchases copper in Slovakia and the material is delivered directly to Montanwerke Brixlegg. We then receive a report from Brixlegg where the quality of the material is assessed. As soon as I receive approval of the quality from my supervisor, I calculate the purchase and sales prices.

What does a typical working day look like?

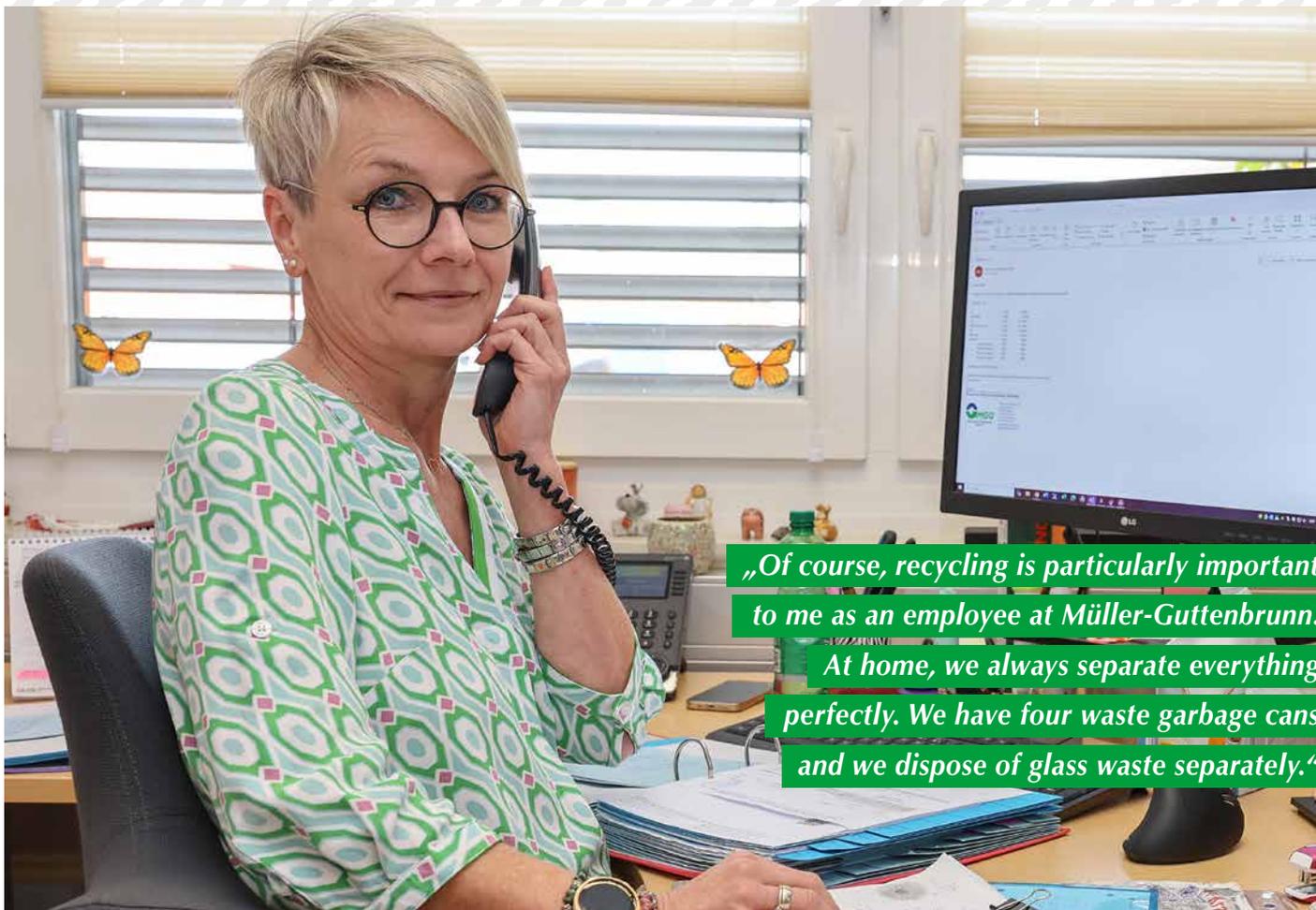
FIXL: Every day is a little different, and that's the great thing about it, because the variety is what makes the job so interesting. I'm a real morning person, I'm already in the office at 6.00 am. The flexitime model is really great for me because I can often go home earlier. It's also still quiet in the office in the morning, so I have plenty to do. First, I check my e-mails and see which invoices are due. Then I check the incoming goods weighing slips for Metrec and Metran. And then I have various tasks, such as forwarding the material analyses to our purchasing department, which uses them to calculate the price per ton.

Is the job still fun after 22 years?

FIXL: Definitely! Even if it sounds dry, it's not at all, quite the opposite. My work is interesting and varied. I have daily contact with my colleagues and am responsible for a wide variety of things.

In your opinion, how has technological development affected administration in your company and what new trends or tools have you introduced in your work?

FIXL: Of course, digitalization has been an issue for us for years. For example, the results of the truck scales have recently been automatically posted to the corresponding con-



„Of course, recycling is particularly important to me as an employee at Müller-Guttenbrunn. At home, we always separate everything perfectly. We have four waste garbage cans and we dispose of glass waste separately.“

tract. Or the provisions that the computer now automatically outputs for me. In the past, you had to write everything down by hand. But you still must check the data. Because despite all the digital developments, PCs are not always perfect. You have to look over it again, because where people enter data, mistakes can happen. Thank goodness MGG still „works properly“ and not everything is automated. We used to communicate a lot by fax, but today, for example, purchasing contracts or analyses are only sent by email. However, we can't go completely paperless either. Sometimes I'm even glad when the computer goes on strike and I have my folders to hand and can look them up. The analog printouts give me a certain security, so to speak.

What skills or qualities do you think are particularly important to be successful in your position?

FIXL: Basically, flexibility is required. But you should also have a good sense of humor, sometimes you need a broad back, and of course accuracy helps a lot. You also need to have a certain love of technical topics – but you grow into it, that was the case for me too.

How do you deal with errors or discrepancies in the accounts?

FIXL: Where there are people, there is humanity. Everyone does their best here and if you work well with your colleagues, everything can usually be resolved. Only those who don't work can't make mistakes. If something does happen, it's usually just minor things or inaccuracies that can easily be rectified.

Can you tell us about a particularly challenging situation or a sense of achievement that you experienced during your time at MGG?

FIXL: I can remember a situation where we were very short-staffed due to a few sick days. And on that very day, we had an old car campaign where we paid a very good price for old cars. There was a queue of customers right up to the main road – all the way to Möbelix. We had our hands full because we hadn't expected such a rush. But everything worked out in the end, Dagmar and I worked together perfectly and it was a really good feeling in the evening to have achieved everything.

How do you see the future of your field of activity? Are there any particular developments or changes that you are particularly excited about?

FIXL: We are in the middle of a major changeover. As already mentioned, the results of the weighbridge, which is located next to the office building, are automatically transferred digitally to the purchasing contracts. Possible complaints will also be entered digitally in future. In future, all containers will also be provided with codes. Despite all these technical developments, I am convinced that people are still needed, and that is a good thing. Basically, our lives are becoming more and more digital, but we have to be careful and should view everything with a healthy sense of proportion. The question is: what makes sense digitally and what is perhaps not so efficient after all? I think it's important to listen to employees with a lot of experience when it comes to further development.

Finally, can we ask you a few personal questions? How important is sustainability in your private life?

FIXL: Of course, recycling is particularly important to me as an employee at Müller-Guttenbrunn. At home, we always separate everything perfectly. We have four waste garbage

cans and we dispose of glass waste separately. However, it's not always easy to separate everything properly due to the constant changes to the separation requirements. Sometimes you have to think really carefully.

Please introduce Astrid Fixl in a little more detail. What do you do to balance out your varied job?

FIXL: I live in Blindenmarkt, am married and have a 34-year-old son, a daughter-in-law and a grandchild. In my free time, I enjoy playing tennis with my husband. We are also both involved in the Blindenmarkt soccer club, where we often volunteer in the canteen or help at the flea market. Our latest hobby is our e-bikes, which we bought through the leasing campaign from firmenradl.at. It's a really great initiative that is supported by my employer, the Müller-Guttenbrunn Group. After the four years of leasing, you can buy the bike or get a new one, and the best thing is that the costs are staggered according to your personal earnings. We have been riding our e-bikes in our home country ever since.

Ms. Fixl, thank you very much for the interview and all the best for the future! ■



„Every day is a little different, and that's the great thing about it, because the variety is what makes the job so interesting.“

IERC 2024: Current and future challenges

The 22nd International Electronic Recycling Congress (IERC) took place last year from January 17 to 19 and – as in previous years – was held in Salzburg. Around 500 international experts from the fields of production, design, promotion, business development, material supply, recycling, logistics and authorities came together to exchange views and experiences.

All in all, IERC 2024, the leading event in the world of circular economy electronics, offered a comprehensive conference program with lectures, discussion panels, workshops and an excursion to the Müller-Guttenbrunn Group in Amstetten and Kematen an der Ybbs. Last year's conference focused on topics such as „Extended producer responsibility“, „Design for recycling“ and „Right to repair“, to name but a few. Companies from the USA and Australia presented refurbishment models that could also be implemented in Europe.

IERC Honorary Award 2024 went to recycler from Ireland

Kurt Kyck from KMK Metals Recycling, Ireland, spoke at the beginning of the congress about the path that e-waste will take in the future. He criticized the fact that recyclers are held responsible for the illegal shipment of WEEE outside the European Union. Manufacturers, on the other hand, take little responsibility in this matter. There is hardly any willingness to change, producers are intent on selling their products and the post-use phase is not in their interest, criticized Kyck. Later in the day, Kurt Kyck was presented with the IERC Honorary Award 2024 for his achievements as an entrepreneur. The laudatory speech was given by Jean Cox-Kearns, Chair of the IERC Steering Committee.

„Design for recycling“: recycling companies make recycling a success

Also among the speakers was Caroline Kennedy from Logitech, who reported that the computer accessories manufacturer uses recycled plastics in the manufacture of its products. The company is looking at recycling processes in operational practice in order to draw conclusions for the design of product developments. „How do I design something so that it can be recycled again?“ is the basic principle. The tenor of the discussion was that changes only take place in practice. All targets to increase the WEEE recycling rate require practical implementation. Ultimately, only the recycling companies can achieve recycling success.



The participants also agreed that the EU must become more resilient and less dependent on raw material imports. Manufacturers and recyclers should cooperate better, but awareness still needs to be raised. There is also room for improvement in WEEE collection, especially when it comes to information on return points. Consumers often do not know where they can return their old appliances or dispose of them properly. The participants in the discussion agreed that manufacturers need to provide detailed information on the components used in order to make products even more recyclable.

Refurbishment and the right to repair

Another important focus of the congress was the topic of the „right to repair“. Jérémy Fouriau from Belgium explained the new EU directives. Refurbishment models from Australia and the USA, which could also set a precedent in Europe, were also presented. More electronic waste is repaired in these countries than here in Europe. Toner powder from printer cartridges, for example, is also used as an asphalt additive.

Visit by Environment Minister Leonore Gewessler at the IERC 2024

The former Austrian Minister for Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology, Leonore Gewessler, also visited IERC 2024. In her welcoming speech, she emphasized the importance of recycling old electrical appliances: „The transformation to a climate-neutral circular economy requires comprehensive changes, not only of a technological and economic nature, but also in the fundamental attitudes and behaviours of society as a whole – a comprehensive paradigm shift.“ ■

High-ranking visitors to the Müller-Guttenbrunn sites

On 30 August 2024, a high-ranking delegation from Thailand visited the Müller-Guttenbrunn sites Metrec in Amstetten and Metran in Kematen/Ybbs. The participants were made up of members of UNIDO, the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation, and the Thai Ministry of the Interior.

The delegation was in Vienna as part of the project 'Greening the scrap metal value chain by promoting BAT/BEP to reduce POP emissions from recycling plants'. As the participants had already travelled all the way to Austria, they seized the opportunity to benefit from the experience of the Austrian industry in the field of metal recycling and visited two of the three MGG sites in Austria.

Daniel Forstner (Innovation Management) and Lisa Maria Rainer (Head of Quality & Environmental Management) warmly welcomed the guests to Amstetten. Lisa Maria Rainer began by giving the experts from Thailand a presentation to familiarise them with the Müller-Guttenbrunn Group. This led to an intensive discussion about, for example, legal and organisational requirements such as recycling quotas or the demand for plastics. The differences between the two countries were analysed and experiences and procedures were exchanged and discussed.

Metran and Metrec provide impressive insights

The tour of the Metrec plant in Amstetten then began, where the EVA shredder and the state-of-the-art material separation system were particularly impressive. From Amstetten, the guests were taken by shuttle bus to the Metran site in Kematen/Ybbs. The aim was to demonstrate the entire 'metal processing chain' – from shredding to sorting secondary raw materials such as aluminium, stainless steel or copper. The delegation from Thailand was given a generous insight into the Austrian recycling industry and the waste utilisation technologies at Metrec and Metran. The detailed explanations of the innovative technologies in scrap processing and the circular economy aroused great interest. They were particularly impressed by the large number of innovative recycling processes and technologies for the efficient recovery of materials from ferrous and non-ferrous metals as well as waste electrical and electronic equipment. The opportunity to follow the entire waste processing procedure on site with their own eyes provided a valuable insight into the high level of expertise and great pioneering spirit of the entire Müller-Guttenbrunn Group.

Recycling rates and processes in Austria and Thailand

During the course of the day, discussions were held focusing on the legal regulations and recycling processes in

The delegation from Thailand repeatedly emphasised how much the company contributes to progress throughout Europe with its vision of the circular economy and sustainability.





The Thai guests were particularly impressed by the large number of innovative recycling processes and technologie.

Austria and Thailand. It was noted that Austria has more sophisticated systems and a higher recycling rate than is the case in the guests' home country. The experts explained that in Thailand, a large proportion of household waste is not collected by officially authorised bodies or companies, which poses major challenges for the recycling infrastructure. Added to this are the rapidly growing volumes of waste, which urgently need to be tackled through an improved separation system directly at the point of origin. The participants agreed that there is great potential for improvement in Thailand. More and more political initiatives are being launched to raise public awareness and establish effective recycling systems.

Enriching and inspiring encounter for everyone involved

The Thai delegation expressed their sincere thanks for the hospitality and the exciting insights into the work of the Müller-Guttenbrunn Group. They repeatedly emphasised how much the company contributes to progress throughout Europe with its vision of the circular economy and sustainability.

Visit by Environment Minister Gewessler

On March 22, 2024, the Minister for Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology, Leonore Gewessler, visited two companies of the Müller-Guttenbrunn Group and got a personal impression of the current challenges facing the Austrian recycling industry. ■



MGG Polymers prepares for the future **with a new logistics centre.**

As part of a multi-year investment programme – known internally as „Growth Strategy 2030“ – plastics recycler MGG Polymers is currently expanding its plant in Kematen an der Ybbs. More than six million euros are currently being invested in a new logistics centre. This will equip the plant for future tasks and make it fit for future challenges. In addition to a warehouse with an adjoining office building, a racking warehouse, four loading silos and sufficient space for internal transport have been created on an area of 7,000 m².

MGG Polymers' 2030 growth strategy is based on the assumption that interest in sustainable plastics and sustainable plastic products will increase in Europe in the medium and long term. This is also evident from developments in the relevant European regulations. In the plastics recycling industry, it is assumed that the growth of sustainable plastic products in Europe will increase in the future. Those responsible at MGG Polymers expect sales of recycled plastic supplied to European countries to at least double in the next five to ten years.

However, the growth strategy should also form the basis for leading the company into a successful future. MGG Polymers celebrates its 20th anniversary in 2025. Innovati-

ons and investments need to be made in order to optimise existing systems and to accelerate the development of new processes.

In the future, Polymers wants to develop new products and new product segments in addition to the product types that have been successful to date in order to remain a pioneer in the industry.

MGG Polymers currently produces – by adding various additives to the respective base plastic – around 60 product types, which have recently been accommodated in the newly built warehouse. As production „on demand“ does not fit into the company's operational model, the challenge is to satisfy customer demand with the most continuous production possible and minimal changeover. Polymers must guarantee its customers security of supply so that their production processes can run smoothly. This requires an appropriate stock level. The conditions for this have now been created with the construction of the new warehouse, which is reserved exclusively for the storage of finished products.

Logistics centre for improving internal processes

In addition to the new logistics centre, the volume flows within the company premises in Kematen an der Ybbs are



„It was great how we were able to create something new here together.“

being reorganised to improve internal processes. New entrance and exit gates have been created in the north and south-eastern areas, and the weighbridge and radioactivity measurement system have been relocated accordingly. In future, raw materials will be delivered to the east of the company premises. The newly built warehouse is used exclusively for finished goods, which are stored in bags on pallets or in big bags. The racking system extends over three floors and therefore makes optimum use of the height of the hall. A remote-controlled shuttle system moves the goods to the desired position in a time-saving manner, replacing the time-consuming and often difficult positioning using forklift trucks.

A two-storey office building was erected next to the new product warehouse, which houses rooms for the logistics team, sanitary facilities and ancillary rooms as well as a technical room on the upper floor. The entire building complex is heated – sustainably and completely free of fossil fuels – by underfloor heating powered by heat pumps. The installation of a PV system is being planned and is expected to be realised in 2025. The product warehouse will be completed by four loading silos so that the products produced can also be delivered to customers in silo lorries.

Günther Höggerl, Technical Managing Director of MGG Polymers, is more than satisfied with the new internal logistics and the associated changes: 'As our location in the Kematen an der Ybbs business park is limited in terms of space, but our concept includes the fact that our product

will continue to be manufactured at this location, there was a need for action. After 20 years, we urgently needed to optimise the logistics and material flows in the limited traffic areas at the plant.'

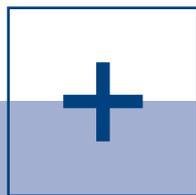
Sufficient time for planning enabled perfect implementation

The planning phase for these expansion steps took around two years. The collaboration between internal employees and external decision-makers was intensive and characterised by great commitment. As Polymers was aware that the legal framework would pose a major challenge, the decision was made to involve the relevant authorities on an ongoing basis during the planning phase. Project manager Christian Neumann attended many meetings in this regard and is certain: 'In retrospect, I can say that it was one of the best decisions to proceed in this way. The dialogue atmosphere was relaxed and many things were clarified in advance by mutual agreement.'

The practical realisation of the project finally began in October 2023. Both Günther Höggerl and Christian Neumann are full of praise for the regional partner companies: 'The support we received from our partners PSB – Markus Schnabl, the construction companies Pöchlacher Bau and Lehner Bau, Dachzentrum Haberhauer and the installation company Steiner – to name just a few – was excellent. They made a significant contribution to the smooth running of the construction project.' Their thanks also go to all internal employees who contributed to the planning and implementation of the logistics centre. Höggerl and Neumann also express their gratitude to those responsible at the Müller-Guttenbrunn Group: 'It was great how we were able to create something new here together.'

Looking to the future: We want to hand over a functioning company to those who come after us

With the construction of the logistics centre, MGG Polymers has reached the end of its construction possibilities at the site – due to the geographical conditions. Roughly speaking, what has now been created must be sufficient for the realisation of other concepts already planned. New technologies are already being worked on in order to get even more out of the available material and to recycle it. The aim must be to increase the depth of recycling and send even fewer fractions to incineration. A pioneering spirit is still required from the recyclers from the Mostviertel region, because the challenges are not getting any less. That's why MGG Polymers lives true to the motto 'It's about CO2!' ■



DATES, FACTS & FIGURES:

- Start of planning: October 2021
- Start of construction: October 2023
- Completion (planned): End of August 2024
- Total investment amount 'Growth Strategy 2030': > 6 million euros
- Usable area of warehouse and office building: 3000 m²
- Built-up area warehouse: 2700 m²
- Warehouse: Multishuttle rack storage with approx. 2400 storage spaces on 3 floors
- 4 loading silos with a filling volume of 55 m³ each

Forth generation: Maximilian Müller-Guttenbrunn joins the family business.

Maximilian Müller-Guttenbrunn, the fourth generation of the family, joined the company in September 2023. Unfazed and without pressure from outside, he takes an overview of what his ancestors have built up. When asked where he sees his future, he has a clear answer: here, in the company that my great-grandfather founded and my grandfather and father developed further.

Many people have known him for years. He has always worked in the company during his holidays, in his early days on the 'yard'. Today, at the age of 26, he sits on the management board and learns from the elders what he needs to know for his future and the future of the company. There is a great deal of respect for what the employees out there achieve. Max, as he likes to be called, joined the company last autumn. Before that, he completed his Master's degree in 'Export & Internationalisation Management' at the Vienna University of Economics and Business.

The first few months were characterised by getting to know the company in all its facets. He was at least superficially familiar with a lot of things from his holiday internships, having often worked in controlling with Michael Kimmeswenger at Metrec during his school days at Metran and during his business studies. His plan to join the company also matured at that time. 'I already decided in favour of the business sector in secondary school. Although I often expressed the wish to study medicine as a child, I decided to study business administration after my civilian service, which I completed at the Waidhofen/Ybbs hospital,' says Max.

Lots of support from all sides

Max currently works with Martin Kriegel and Dietmar Berger on a day-to-day basis. He trades in metals, purchases for Metran, but can also always be found in the materials receiving department. Together with Manuel Riedl, who



„It's very motivating to carry on what my family has built up and to preserve the tradition.“

also works in purchasing and is responsible for technical development, he is working on various projects for the future. Max is also responsible for the Müller-Guttenbrunn Group's presence and marketing on social media, such as Instagram. In order to get to know the recycling industry better in general, Maximilian Müller-Guttenbrunn also travels a lot to conferences and meetings with associations, sometimes representing the local company on his own.

At the Müller-Guttenbrunn Group plants, it is nothing unusual for employees to work with or meet the boss's son, as some of them have known him since he was a teenager. He, in turn, feels at home in 'his' company and is happy to lend a hand wherever he can. 'I still have to learn to understand a lot of what goes on in our halls and facilities, which is sometimes not so easy. I'm very grateful that they are willing to explain everything to me when I ask, sometimes even a second time (smiles),' says Max to his colleagues.

For his part, Max's father, Christian Müller-Guttenbrunn, attaches great importance to his son getting to know all sides and facets of the job. The two of them can therefore be seen together at the company's general meetings, which reflect the entirety of the Group.

From scrap yard to internationally operating company. Still no pressure.

Maximilian Müller-Guttenbrunn never felt any pressure from his family to develop in a certain direction. Nevertheless, his father and grandfather were immensely proud when he decided to join the company.

'I have great respect for all those who have built up this impressive company. I really want to do my best here,' says Max, looking forward to the future. 'It's very motivating to carry on what my family has built up and to preserve the tradition.'

Max didn't realise for a long time just how big the footsteps were that his father and grandfather had created. As a child, he didn't really realise how much his father worked. When he was at home, he spent all his time looking after his fami-



ly. It was only when his son started to grow into the company bit by bit that he realised what his father had achieved. There is also no pressure for Max within the Group for the time being. He can take his time to look around and then decide where he sees himself and where he can make the most difference. In addition to his job, he completes training and further education programmes that prepare him for his professional future.

New minds, new materials, new technologies

In the future, new technologies will be needed to process new materials that come onto the market. This means that the task of saving the world from unnecessary waste will never be boring. 'The fact that you can create something new from waste, from what has been thrown away, is fascinating. I am confident that we will be able to keep pace with the challenges ahead,' says Max. He is also aware that the Müller-Guttenbrunn Group will have to do without great colleagues who have been with us for many years in the medium term. They will be retiring. Until that time comes, it is important to break new ground and find solutions.

Maximilian Müller-Guttenbrunn private

For Max, sport is essential to balance out his job. He can therefore regularly be found in the gym. In addition to numerous outdoor activities, he has actively played American football in his university team since his student days. Whether he will still find the time for this in the future, however, is written in the stars. But Max is optimistic here too: 'If football doesn't work out, I'll find something else that keeps me fit and clears my head for new ideas. ■

„Perfect Match“ for the future: student wrote her final thesis about her studies at MGG Polymers.

Nina Wailzer, a student at the University of Applied Sciences Upper Austria in Wels, completed a 10-week internship at MGG Polymers for her bachelor's thesis. The task was to find out where the highest rubber content accumulates in the process flow and – subsequently – to reduce it. She successfully completed her degree in 'Process Engineering Production' at the beginning of July. The results will soon be implemented at MGG Polymers.

The technophile from Waidhofen began training as a process technician at Welser-Profile in 2016, which she completed as an apprenticeship with a school-leaving certificate. The desire to further deepen her knowledge and skills

led her to start studying 'Process Engineering Production' at the University of Applied Sciences Upper Austria in Wels in 2021. During her research for a suitable company for a compulsory internship, she came across MGG Polymers.

The enquiry came at the right time for those responsible at the recycling company, as there were a number of topics on their 'to do list' that needed to be dealt with. They suggested one of these topics to Nina Wailzer, which also suited the student, and the collaboration was quickly sealed. One of her biggest advocates at the time was Gerald Jagersberger, Production Manager at Polymers, who recognised the young student's potential very early on.

A photograph showing a man and a woman in a factory environment. The man, on the left, is wearing a dark blue polo shirt and has a beard. He is leaning over a large, dark, reflective surface, possibly a piece of machinery or a workbench, and is pointing at it with his right hand. The woman, on the right, is wearing a dark blue t-shirt and has long brown hair. She is looking down at the same surface with a focused expression. The background shows industrial equipment, including metal frames and a red fire extinguisher.

„The desire to improve was there on both sides. It was a ‘perfect match’.“

Topic of the work: Excessive residual rubber content in polystyrene

In addition to the various plastic fractions, e-waste also contains rubber components. In the case of polystyrene in particular, the aim was to further reduce the rubber content, as the rubber forms streaks in the extruded material, which reduces the quality of the PCR plastics.

Nina's task was to take measures to solve this problem. Before she started the actual work, however, she invested in a two-week familiarisation phase. The student scrutinised the entire separation process and had every detail explained to her. Only then did she start the research for her thesis. As this could not take place during ongoing operations, she was provided with a rubber separator for testing. Process technician Johannes Müller-Guttenbrunn often acted as her contact person, providing advice and support.

Nina found out what options were available for separating the residual rubber from the polystyrene and ultimately decided in favour of the mechanical method because it was the most effective. She left the basic structure of the rubber separator unchanged. She increased the number of separator plates, changed angles, adapted inclinations and tried out different distances to the conveyor units. It took several series of tests before the result was to everyone's satisfaction.

Between the test series, the rubber separator was repeatedly rebuilt, giving Nina some downtime. She used this time to devote herself to other projects. Together with Armin Delic, she solved the problem of pellets repeatedly sticking together during the extrusion process. Replacing screens brought relief.

Setbacks for progress

'Progress requires committed people with a professional background who can also cope with setbacks. These are not easy to find. In Nina Wailzer, I was able to get to know a young student who has these qualities and prerequisites,' says Polymers Managing Director Günther Höggerl, praising Wailzer's commitment. 'The systems will be adapted according to the results of her research work and will definitely bring us a leap in efficiency.'

Nina Wailzer relaxed before the next step

After Nina Wailzer continued to work shifts at Welser Profile during her studies and was unable to spare any time for her private life and hobbies, she took a few weeks off after her internship.



However, she also wanted to use the time to find out where her professional future might lie. She also included a Master's degree programme in her considerations. Part-time.

'I would like to take this opportunity to thank MGG Polymers for being so welcoming. My innovative spirit was perfectly supported. The desire to improve was there on both sides. It was a 'perfect match', so to speak'.

MGG Polymers wishes Nina Wailzer all the best for the future! ■

He harmonises **people, material and machines.**

Patrick Hofer often sees his job as a game of chess. As shift supervisor, he assigns people to the appropriate machines, creates shift schedules according to material availability and ensures that the right material is available at the right machines. His constant companions are his radio, mobile phone and a large portion of calm and composure.

Mr Hofer, you have been working for the Müller-Guttenbrunn Group for 13 years. What made you decide to apply for a job at MGG Metran?

I was in a job that didn't fulfil me and that involved a lot of overtime and little time for my family. My circle of friends and acquaintances knew about this and one day an acquaintance advised me to apply to Müller-Guttenbrunn because they were looking for people.

What happened next? You obviously got the job?

Yes, I was accepted, which I was really happy about. The job at MGG Metran had many advantages for me. The route

to work was shorter, I had more free time due to the shift work and the elimination of a lot of overtime and – as a bonus – the job also paid better. This was extremely important in my situation at the time, as I had bought a house that needed to be renovated and made ready for my family.

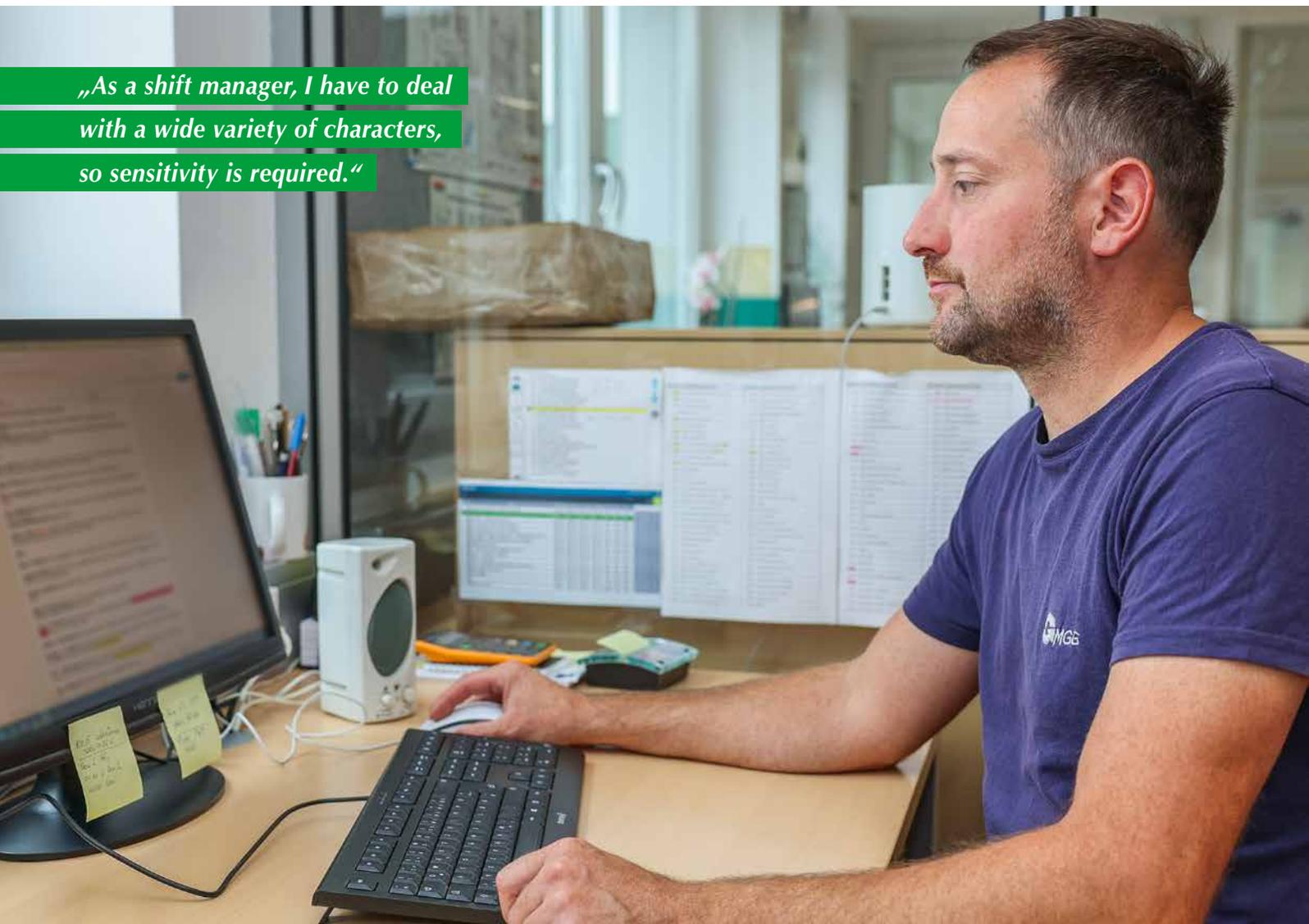
What position was that back then?

At the beginning, I was kind of „passed through the company“. From one plant to the next to familiarise myself with the plant and the materials we deal with here. After a few weeks, I ended up in HMS (Heavy Medium Separation).

Do you have to have previous professional experience?

No, not at all. What you do need is a certain understanding of machines and technical processes. I learnt everything else from my colleagues. You can start up the system and switch it off again relatively quickly. It takes years to deal with all the pitfalls and the special troubleshooting options for various error messages. You're constantly learning from

„As a shift manager, I have to deal with a wide variety of characters, so sensitivity is required.“



your colleagues who have been with you for longer. At the same time as working on the HMS, I was also employed as a loader driver.

How long have you been a shift manager at Metran and what challenges does this position entail?

After 10 years at HMS, I was offered the vacant position of shift or production manager. I had the confidence to take on this position and a few days later I was told that I had got the job.

My job is to ensure that the shift operation runs smoothly. In concrete terms, this means making sure that all the systems are running, the material flows are functioning and – very importantly – that my colleagues are perfectly organised within the shift. What sounds relatively simple in theory is often a difficult task in practice. You have to maintain an overview in every situation, react quickly to changes and communicate well with your colleagues so that everyone is immediately informed of the new circumstances. Conversely, I have to be able to rely on my people to give me the necessary feedback, which I can then use as a basis for my future decisions.

This begs the question: What about predictability? There seem to be a lot of variable factors within a shift.

I am responsible for up to 19 colleagues on a shift who have to be scheduled. Not every person can operate every system. This fact becomes interesting when someone is absent, i.e. on holiday or sick leave. The shorter the notice of absence, the more challenging it can be to find a replacement. This often necessitates major shifts, especially during the main holiday period, which can sometimes even be shared between shifts.

But it's not just the people who need to be organised, the material flows also need to be coordinated. Is there enough material available at each plant, when does it need to be „topped up“ or is there even enough raw material in the plant? Some plants process material that is delivered directly, while others continue to process what has already been pre-treated within the plant. Here, too, it is important to channel the flows in such a way that all systems can be operated and no system „runs out“ of material. In fact, shift schedules often depend on which or how much material is delivered. Long-term scheduling of shifts is only possible in the rarest of cases, with short-termism prevailing for the most part. And then it can also happen that technical problems occur, which then have to be resolved internally as quickly as possible.

Let me come back to the human component. Isn't that the most challenging part of the whole thing?

That's certainly true. As a shift manager, I have to deal with a wide variety of characters, so sensitivity is required. The team structure is extremely important, the team has to be kept together. It only works here if everyone gets on well together. The times when we used the well-known „crow-bar“ are – thank God – long gone. If things do get heated, it's important to keep calm and find a compromise. It's also up to me to motivate people and create a good atmosphere. Sharing a coffee, a pizza or even a beer at the end of a shift helps to promote team spirit.

Is there such a thing as a „typical working day“ for you?

Typical is that every day is different. Nevertheless, there are a few fixed points. I always phone my shift manager colleague in the evening to bring us up to date. Have there been any problems? Are repairs necessary or still in progress? Will everything be finished as planned? We can't afford to go into our own working day „blind“ in the interests of efficient collaboration. I then start my shift by unlocking all the halls, starting up the compressors and inspecting the material. My colleagues arrive shortly before five, we talk through the most important things and then we start on time.

From this point on, the radio and telephone are my constant companions. I start organising and adapting the day's schedule. I answer my people's questions over the radio: What material is going where? Which box is free? What comes next? I constantly correct the procedures on the computer and adapt them to the situation. The loader drivers have a tablet in their vehicles that informs them immediately of any changes. I also make the announcements over the radio on an ongoing basis. But I also rely on my colleagues outside to give feedback and provide information. We organise the day together.

I'm sure you're well occupied with that. But I can imagine that you still have one or two special tasks to fulfil?

I'm not only shift manager, but also production manager. As such, I am responsible, among other things, for analysing the mixing material delivered. Gunther Panowitz makes the supplier a financial offer based on our analyses. If the offer fits, the material is delivered to us, if it doesn't, another recycler gets the contract.

When new people are hired, we also need to be able to judge after a while whether the new colleague is up to the job requirements or would perhaps be better off elsewhere

in the plant. Together with my colleagues, I am also responsible for ensuring that the maintenance intervals for the systems are adhered to.

In the 13 years that you have been with the Müller-Guttenbrunn Group, has there been a special experience that you would like to tell us about?

THE moment for me was when I learnt that I had been accepted for the position of shift and production manager. The fact that the company management placed their trust in me out of all the applicants will always remain a great moment in my memory.

What do you find special about the Müller-Guttenbrunn Group?

Although the company is a respectable size and also operates sites abroad, it is run in a very family-like way. As an employee, you are not just a number, as is often the case in other companies. Our boss, Christian Müller-Guttenbrunn, visits the factory several times a week. He is always friendly and happy to make small talk. He takes an interest in his employees, which is motivating.

The company's internal events and excursions, which are not a matter of course, are particularly popular. Just recently, this year's Kart Trophy took place. It's always a highlight and we have a lot of fun together.

Another great thing about MGG is that you can climb the career ladder, regardless of your profession. I am the best

example of this. When a position becomes available, everyone has the chance to apply for it and get it. That spurs you on to give your best.

When you look to the future: Where do you think the challenges will lie?

The most important thing will be to increase efficiency. The material supplied no longer has the quality it used to have. It has often already been through other recyclers and only contains what they were unable to extract. It is now up to us to develop processes to work with this „deprived“ material and earn money with it. A major challenge, but one that is absolutely necessary. This is the only way we can relieve the burden on our environment and promote the circular economy.

Speaking of the circular economy: has your approach to sustainability and recycling changed since you joined the Müller-Guttenbrunn Group?

Separating waste has always been a matter of course at home. My parents emphasised this. We didn't buy anything nonsensical, old things were recycled or disposed of appropriately. Of course, my approach to this topic has been reinforced by my work at MGG-Metran. And I also brought up my children with this in mind.

Saving the best for last: what is Patrick Hofer like in his private life?

I am married and have two daughters (aged 19 and 21) with my wife. We live together in our house in Neufurth, which we bought a few years ago and have been renovating step by step ever since. I enjoy working in the garden, where I also like to relax by the pool in summer.

One of my great passions is cars, I own an Audi S6 Turbo, built in 1996. As I am a trained car mechanic, I like to tinker with it and repair more than I drive (laughs).

Another of my hobbies is actually Lego bricks. I've been involved with Lego's Creator line for many years. Since we've been living in our house, I have even more space for them.

Mr. Hofer, thank you very much for the interview and all the best for the future! ■



Teambuilding: Mask in Blue

To mark the 70th anniversary of the Müller-Guttenbrunn company, the management invited guests to a special performance at the 35th „Herbsttage Blindenmarkt“. The programme included the operetta ‘Mask in Blue’ by Fred Raymond.

Working together, celebrating together. Being successful as a team brings people together. Celebrating successes together also creates a sense of unity on an emotional level that endures and helps to overcome situations that can sometimes be challenging.

Looking back on 70 years of company history

Last October, the anniversary ‘70 years of Müller-Guttenbrunn’ provided an occasion to celebrate together. Together, around 200 employees and their companions attended a special performance at the 35th „Herbsttage Blindenmarkt“. Among the participants were the Managing Directors of Polymers, Maximilian Hager and Günther Höggerl, Metran Managing Director Gunther Panowitz, Maximilian

Müller-Guttenbrunn and, of course, the CEO of the Müller-Guttenbrunn Group, Christian Müller-Guttenbrunn, to name but a few. We were delighted that retired colleagues – above all Chris Slijkhuis – also took part in the event. The programme included the operetta ‘Mask in Blue’ by Fred Raymond. The organisation of the evening was in the capable hands of Alexandra Müller-Guttenbrunn. ‘After the more sporting events in the past, it’s a great experience for me to see how many colleagues are also enthusiastic about culture,’ said Christian Müller-Guttenbrunn, delighted that so many employees accepted the invitation to this special evening.

At 6.40 pm, the guests took their seats in the auditorium of the Ybbsfeldhalle to experience a historical review of 70 years of company history. The first 60 years were reviewed in a film. The years 2014 to 2024 were presented in person by the CEO of the Group, Christian Müller-Guttenbrunn.

Special performance ‘Mask in Blue’

Before the well-known melodies such as ‘Maske in Blau’ (‘Mask in Blue’) or ‘Schau’ einer schönen Frau nicht zu tief in die Augen’ (‘Don’t look too deeply into the eyes of a beautiful woman’) were played, the director of Herbsttage Blindenmarkt, Michael Garschall, welcomed the guests. However, his speech also contained a little surprise. The leading actress, Andreja Zidaric, had suddenly fallen ill, which made it necessary to change the cast.

Shortly after 8.00 pm, the curtain went up and the operetta could begin. The story of Armando, who was courting his beloved, quickly captivated everyone. The refreshing, ‘dusted off’ production under the overall direction of Michael Garschall was well received by everyone in the audience. The lively orchestra was conducted by Kurt Dlouhy, who was also responsible for the overall musical direction. The costumes were designed by Julia Pschedezki and Tina Fessler was responsible for the make-up. A reception was set up in the foyer during the interval. Snacks and drinks were offered and the atmosphere among the theatre-goers was excellent.

Team spirit through joint activities

The final curtain fell at around 10.30 pm. After the performance, the evening was brought to a cosy close in the foyer of the Ybbsfeldhalle. A very successful company event that will remain a positive memory for everyone involved for a long time to come. Once again, the company’s team spirit was brought into focus. Shared experiences unite! ■



Teambuilding: Running events and the Kart Trophy

Team building is an essential part of the success of a modern company. Defining goals together and celebrating achievements. On the job – as in sport – success is often not an individual achievement, but teamwork. The employees of the Müller-Guttenbrunn Group not only proved this at the legendary Kart Trophy, they also demonstrated their sporting stamina as a team at the city run in Waidhofen/Ybbs and at the business run in Ardagger.

Sporting activities provide the perfect basis for strengthening team spirit and promoting cohesion within a group. Overcoming challenges together „welds“ people together and strengthens their awareness of being able to rely on their colleagues.

City run in Waidhofen/Ybbs

The employees of the Müller-Guttenbrunn Group had the opportunity to promote community and team spirit on 20 April in Waidhofen/Ybbs. Under the motto „It's about CO₂ – we run for a sustainable future“, two relay teams from MGG Polymers took part in the traditional running event, which was organised by the Waidhofen/Ybbs Sports Union for the 39th time this year. Together with Willi Bammacher, Helga Berger, Kathrin Bühringer, Daniel Forstner, Christoph Laubichler, Irhad Petrovic and Lisa Rainer, MGG Polymers Managing Director Maximilian Hager also took part in the competition. „It was a great experience to master this challenge as a team. A successful starting signal for further joint endeavours,“ said a motivated Hager.

Mostviertel Businessrun in Ardagger

The committed employees were able to prove that this

enthusiasm was not just lip service a few weeks later at the 11th Mostviertler Business Run in Ardagger.

On 6 June, three motivated teams from the Müller-Guttenbrunn Group (Helga Berger, Katrin Bühringer, Christoph Etlinger, Daniel Forstner, Maximilian Müller-Guttenbrunn, Maximilian Hager, Christoph Laubichler, Irhad Petrovic and Idris Sari) were among the 500 or so participants at the start. In addition to the sporting aspect and the team-building idea, the focus in Ardagger was on a good cause: part of the entry fee went to the „Lebenschance Mostviertel“ association.

„I've already put the date for the 12th Mostviertel Business Run 2025 in my diary. We'll be back next year,“ said a delighted Maximilian Müller-Guttenbrunn after crossing the finish line.

MGG Kart Trophy

The annual MGG Kart Trophy was on the agenda on 8 June, two days after the running event in Ardagger. The participants travelled from all over Austria to take part. The starting field was completed by Steffen Schulz, Managing Director of the German MER, who was the only driver from a neighbouring country to take part.

This year, the race was held at the karting track in Blindenmarkt, which proved to be more challenging than the Wachauring in Melk, where the race had been held in previous years, due to its many bends. Of course, MGG CEO Christian Müller-Guttenbrunn was also there to greet the teams in person early in the morning before getting into the cockpit himself.





„Sporting activities provide the perfect basis for strengthening team spirit and promoting cohesion within a group.“

In bright sunshine, the drivers started the race day very early with training and qualifying. The start of the 3-hour race, which demanded everything from the drivers, took place at 9.30 am. The temperatures were rising and the drivers were sweating profusely. The highlight came halfway through the race: the karts came into the pits for driver changes and refuelling. A major challenge for everyone involved.

After three hours, the karts raced across the finish line and the race was flagged off without any accidents. Victory

went to a team from Metrec; the lap times of Sepp Üblackner, who virtually „flew“ round the course, could not be beaten. Second and third place went to teams from Metran.

After the award ceremony, the day was brought to a cosy close in beautiful weather. The physical well-being was well catered for: drinks and snacks were generously available from the early hours of the morning. All in all, the MGC Kart Trophy 2024 was another great event where everyone had fun and enjoyed the time together with their colleagues. ■



A quantum leap forward in digitalisation

The Müller-Guttenbrunn Group has introduced an integrated QHSE (Quality Health Safety Environment) management system at its Austrian sites in Amstetten and Kematen an der Ybbs, thereby taking a huge step towards the future. Cloud-based, GDPR-compliant and in compliance with the latest security standards, the company is now able to optimise and standardise the quality of its processes. This huge step in terms of digitalisation once again makes MGG a pioneer in the European recycling industry.

A QHSE-management system is designed to link the areas of quality, health, safety and the environment and to develop a holistic strategy that takes into account the risks and opportunities in these areas. In simple terms, the aim is to fulfil legal requirements, increase efficiency, improve employee health and satisfaction and reduce environmental impact.

An important component of this digital system is the central storage of all necessary documents in an IT-secure cloud. All documents relevant to the Müller-Guttenbrunn Group's processes are stored in this system, which – depending on their authorisation – can be accessed by company employees from anywhere. Documents are not stored locally but are referenced or retrieved from the cloud. This ensures that there is only ever one version of a document – the currently valid version – and that there are no parallel or 'old' versions. This QHSE management system also defines workflow processes and approval processes as well as access rights.

How is the project organised?

Around two years ago, Lisa Maria Rainer (Head of Quality and Environmental Management, MGG Group) and Philipp Felber (Head of Quality and Environmental Management, Product Development MGG Polymers) were tasked by the company management with researching QHSE software. Together with Armin Blutsch, (Head of Group IT MGG Group), the search began. The project team found what they were looking for with Quentic. A long process followed, which began with the conclusion of a contract, followed by the installation of the test environment, a test start with the core team and the go-live, including employee training, which is due to take place shortly. The final stage of commissioning is the complete go-live date, which is scheduled for later on.

What is the system capable of?

The Quentic management system maps the company structure, has a reminder and escalation management system, creates a central, structured file architecture and enables standardised documentation – from root cause analysis to process improvement. The Quentic software can be used to simplify procedures within the organisation and standardise legal requirements, standards, norms, areas or processes

What is the current status of the project?

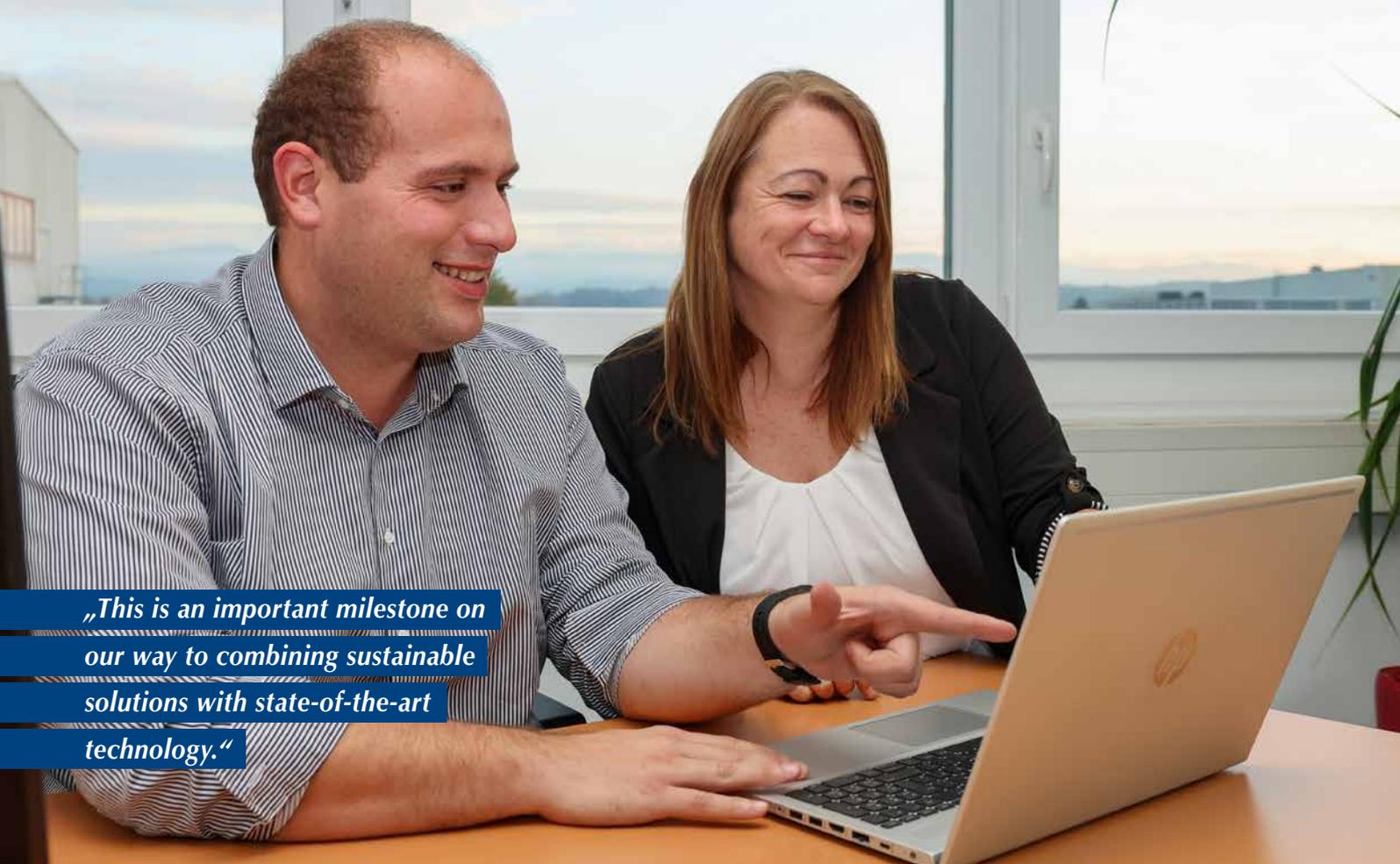
The phase of filling the system with documents and data is now complete and legal compliance has been achieved. The next step is to 'roll out' the system to the company. More and more employees are being trained and familiarised with the benefits of Quentic. This does not happen overnight. Recurring appointments or workshops in small groups are needed to anchor the management system in the company and thus reap all the benefits that the system offers.

Philipp Felber is proud to be part of this project: 'The introduction of the QHSE software (Quentic) sets new standards in our company. We are one of the few companies in the recycling industry in Europe to have implemented software of this kind. This is a significant digitisation step for the Müller-Guttenbrunn Group. With this system, we are not only improving our internal processes, but also strengthening our position as a pioneer in the recycling industry. This is an important milestone on our way to combining sustainable solutions with state-of-the-art technology and fulfilling the high requirements for quality, health, safety and the environment even better.'

Why implement a QHSE management system?

By implementing the management system, the company can expect a number of benefits. Efficiency and productivity will be increased and risks reduced through proactive action. Strong quality management can also be expected to improve product quality, which in turn will increase customer satisfaction and competitiveness. The entire system is based on the principle of continuous improvement, which will lead to higher company performance in the long term. It ensures that work is carried out effectively and sustainably in the areas of quality, health, safety and the environment.

In practice, this means that Quentic not only makes data and documents available across all locations, which are



„This is an important milestone on our way to combining sustainable solutions with state-of-the-art technology.“

all up to date, it also reminds users of obligations and deadlines that must be met from a legal or organisational perspective. For example, numerous recurring inspection obligations have been incorporated.

The range of applications is extremely broad: from employee safety instructions to audits, regular machine checks, forklift inspections and European recycling regulations.

A stored deadline management system reminds you in good time to provide the necessary documents, such as inspection books and papers. And once such checks have been completed, an inspection report is uploaded to the system as proof of completion. Changes to the law are automatically pointed out and a clarification of whether or where changes are required is shown. Audits and official inspections, even unannounced ones, can be handled competently and with little effort. For example, the REACH Regulation or the RoHS Directive can be read quickly and easily to find out how to handle upcoming issues within and outside the EU. Online instructions for employees, reports of accidents at work, working materials and safety data sheets or even safety inspections will also be processed via this new system in future.

When will the project be finalised?

When asked when the process will be completed, Lisa Maria Rainer spontaneously replies: 'That will never be the case, this is a "living" system!' However, she is looking forward to the time when the system is fully operational. 'The simplification in processing will then be more than clear. Deadlines can be adhered to independently of individual persons. The documents will be up-to-date and accessible, and access, reading and editing rights will be perfectly organised'.

The Quentic system ensures that the necessary environmental data for the CO2 footprint is also available. The standards are constantly rising and the requirements are strict: goods may only be transported by lorry on the road to a limited extent, the rest of the journey must be made by rail. Transport must be documented and evidence must be provided. Quentic is also well positioned in this area and is well ahead in the industry. The framework conditions will become even tighter in the future. With the new QHSE management system, the Müller-Guttenbrunn Group is perfectly equipped for this. ■

Well-being as a motivator

Shift change. Some go home, others start their working day. A trip to the locker, a few words with colleagues, a first or last coffee in the canteen. Plastic granules crumble from the soles of work shoes onto the kitchen floor, a carton of milk is left on the table.

This – or something like this – is what happens when there is a shift change at MGG Polymers in Kematen. Work is carried out in three shifts, seven days a week. The administration and management offices are also located at the same site. From Monday to Friday, from the early hours of the morning, it's busy there too. Some start earlier, others stay longer. A colourful hustle and bustle in an innovative and modern company. Always on hand: Brigitte Sallegger and Martina Blamauer, who ensure tidiness and cleanliness.

Brigitte Sallegger and Martina Blamauer, thank you very much for taking the time for this interview. Tell us a little about how your working day starts!

BRIGITTE SALLEGGER: With pleasure! We start at 6.00 in the morning. In the middle of the hustle and bustle of shift changes and the short window of time left before the first office workers start work, we also start our shift.

MARTINA BLAMAUER: We start with the offices. Some colleagues arrive at their workplaces very early. We want to have finished cleaning and not disturb anyone. Then it's time for the routine cleaning. Vacuuming corridors, cleaning sanitary facilities, restocking meeting rooms with missing crockery or drinks, emptying and putting away dishwashers, servicing the coffee machine so that it keeps going and colleagues' moods don't plummet.



„We want to make sure that everyone feels at home here.“

And what happens next?

BRIGITTE: There are now footprints on the floors again. Of course, our colleagues from production keep carrying the particles back into the office building. But no problem. It's quickly cleared up with the Hoover! Then the flowers and green plants are watered, the dishwasher is unloaded and reloaded in the kitchen and the tables are wiped down.

MARTINA: We divide up the floors so that everything can be cleaned quickly and smoothly.

That sounds like a very well-rehearsed team. How do you generally organise your tasks? Apart from the work that has to be done every day, are there any tasks that follow other regularities?

MARTINA: Our work is very varied. Of course, we have daily tasks such as vacuuming, cleaning offices, sanitary facilities or the kitchen and common rooms. But there are also weekly or monthly tasks such as cleaning windows. There has to be room for this between the daily tasks.

BRIGITTE: We also take care of the decorations in the building. We change them according to the season. Sometimes we also take decorative items from home. It's important to us that everyone feels comfortable. That's why we're happy to do it!

MARTINA: We also have to keep an eye on cleaning products and utensils as well as reordering juices and fruit from regional producers. If we need supplies, we hand over an order list to Gerhard Grafeneder or Karin Großbichler, who then carry out the errands or orders.

BRIGITTE: For events or company tours, there is sometimes a bit of organisational work beforehand. We are also happy to help with this and provide advice and support.

MARTINA: But only in the background. We're only on hand again when everything has to be cleared away. One exception is the open day. We also like to work 'in front of the curtain' to give visitors an insight into the company.

What do you think about separating and avoiding waste? Did you already pay attention to this before you started working for the Müller-Guttenbrunn Group?

BRIGITTE: We have both long been in favour of separating and avoiding waste. At work, waste separation is a matter of

course anyway, and we also make sure we produce as little waste as possible at home. The rubbish that is produced is disposed of meticulously and correctly.

MARTINA: It's hard to understand when things are carelessly thrown away. We try to make sure we have less packaging material when we go shopping. This makes it easier to separate waste and protects the environment.

Brigitte, Martina, you seem incredibly full of energy. What do you do in your private life to recover from your working day?

MARTINA: I live with my husband in a house in Kematen an der Ybbs and spend a lot of time in the garden, which is a source of strength. Our daughter has grown up and moved out. My husband and I enjoy travelling. In the past, our destinations were often abroad, but today we like things a little quieter and cosier. We like travelling in Austria, exploring our homeland by bike or hiking in the mountains.

BRIGITTE: Funnily enough, Martina and I share a love of gardening. Unlike her, I have a kitchen garden with fruit and vegetables. I live with my husband and my mother-in-law in our house in Kematen an der Ybbs – another thing we have in common! We have a son and a daughter. I enjoy attending events with my mum. Concerts, performances by cabaret artists or magic shows are just as much a part of it as garden days, Christmas markets or hiking days. We also enjoy going to flea markets. There we browse and search for 'the perfect bargain'.

What makes the perfect workplace for you personally?

BRIGITTE: I enjoy going to work in the morning because I look forward to seeing my colleagues and because I know that my work is appreciated.

MARTINA: For me, it's wonderful to have the feeling of being part of a big family. We are a team that supports each other. That motivates us and gives us strength. I can speak for both of us: We are simply happy to be able to do our work at MGG Polymers.

Thank you, Brigitte and Martina, for giving us an insight into your work. It is inspiring to see how enthusiastic you are about your work at MGG Polymers. ■

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