

ESSENTIALS

The customer magazine of EschmannStahl GmbH & Co. KG

2/2013

The cover features a dark blue background. A large, thick green ring is positioned around a central circular area. This central area is composed of concentric circles: an outer silver ring with a brushed metal texture, a dark blue ring, and a central circle showing a blue sky with white clouds. The word 'PERSPECTIVES' is written in white capital letters across the sky circle.

PERSPECTIVES



Dear reader,

The way in which we look at our environment defines our decisions and our actions. Important here is our perception, our thinking, our feelings, and our imagination. By changing our way of looking at things, namely our perspective, other things become visible. Only he or she who is both able to do this and willing to take the time to do it can discover new things. We will show you what perspectives mean to us and how we gain new insights

from them. This holds true for capabilities, as the story on expertise enhancement in coating technologies shows (see page 4) as well as to people, as the characters in our field-staff team show (see page 8). It's time to encounter new developments.

Enjoy reading.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'MK', located below the 'Enjoy reading.' text.

Your Markus Krepschik (Managing Director)

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„Valuable Addition“



8

„It Fits Character-Wise
and Professionally.“

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Helping Instead of
Holidays

“Valuable Addition”

Enhancement in the area of coating technologies – voestalpine Edelstahl GmbH is taking over parts of the Eifeler Group.

The majority take-over of the Eifeler Group by voestalpine puts EschmannStahl in a position to offer its customers a broader service portfolio, particularly via the new competencies in laser technology. “This is a valuable addition to our already strong performance in surface technology”, Markus Krepschik, Managing Director of EschmannStahl, emphasizes.

At the end of March, the worldwide operating Austrian company voestalpine Edelstahl GmbH took over the majority stake of the Eifeler Group with about 330 staff.

Since that time, the expertise and the technology in the area of coating technologies is part of the portfolio of voestalpine and thus of EschmannStahl.

A photograph of a beach with a large white circle in the center. The circle is overlaid with text. The background shows a sandy beach, the ocean, and a blue sky with white clouds.

LASER WELDING

PRECISION

WEAR PROTECTION

LASER HARDENING

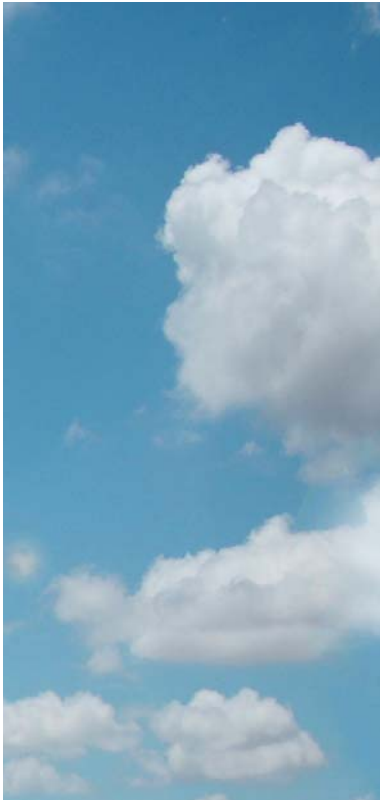
The Eifeler Group

Specializing on the toolmaking industry with high-quality coatings, the company was founded by Hans W. Eifeler in Duesseldorf in 1983. Initially, it was called Eifeler Werkzeug GmbH and was a one-man company. Its core business was tool steel trade, selling agricultural marking stamps, and coatings as commissioned work. Since that time, the company was

able to develop to a globally successful medium-sized business, from the installation of initial equipment for commissioned coatings all the way to research and development targeted at engineering its own systems technology and new coating solutions.

With business locations around the globe the company is close to its customers in various industries, ➔

PERSPECTIVES



The take-over brings additional expertise and capacities in laser technology



More information
on Eifeler

each of which with individual requirements. Consequently, the staff is well-trained with regards to specifics of the different sectors.

Extended Expertise

"Besides the good availability of tool steel and our various mechanical processing options, this gain for the group in terms of technology and expertise

enables us to now support customers even better in surface technology. They benefit from the technological dialog and combined application expertise within the group. The more services we offer via this extension, the more customers can focus on their core competencies", Markus Krepschik summarizes. ■

ADDING TO THE PORTFOLIO

High availability

Six-Sided Machining

Heat treatment

Sawing

Further
mechanical processing

Quality management



Laser welding

Laser hardening

„Urgently Needed Expansion“

As a result of increasing demand, EschmannStahl extends its heat treatment capacities. In the ESSENTIALS interview Managing Director Markus Krepschik talks about the relocation of the heat treatment shop and the ensuing perspectives for customers.

Thorsten Lambart will continue to be responsible for heading the – then enlarged – heat treatment facility. In the Interview, Markus Krepschik explains the further development of the company's portfolio and the advantages customers obtain with the heat treatment shop extension.

ESSENTIALS: Mr. Krepschik, with the upcoming relocation of the heat treatment shop from Wehnrath to Duesseldorf, you will be strengthening the capacities and competencies of EschmannStahl in heat treatment. What specific improvements can customers expect?

We are both relocating our capacities in heat treatment to Duesseldorf and investing in new equipment at the same time. This expansion, which we urgently need,

would not have been possible at the Wehnrath location due to space restrictions.

In Duesseldorf, we will open a heat treatment shop with four vacuum hardening furnaces and nine tempering furnaces. Thorsten Lambart, who presently already heads the heat treatment shop, will be continuing to head the shop at the new location.

ESSENTIALS: What are the reasons for your decision to expand capacities?

Customer demand for services in heat treatment is continuously growing in our company. Our EschmannStahlgrade **ESPRIMUS SL** has already become well-established in combination with heat treatment. And there is a second line of

development, too: We are witnessing a market trend moving towards bigger pressure-die casting inserts, especially for the automotive industry. For these big inserts we have invested in a state-of-the-art 4,500 Kilogram furnace, that is sure to become a benchmark in vacuum heat treatment. To increase our flexibility we have invested in smaller and bigger units.

That way, we are much more versatile and can provide our customers with an even better service in vacuum heat treatment.

ESSENTIALS: Mr. Krepschik, thank you for the interview. ■



The heat treatment capacities are being expanded due to growing demand.

NEW CAPACITIES

- 1 Vacuum hardening furnace and 2 inert gas tempering furnaces with 4,500 kg load capacity (max. dimensions 1200 x 1650 x 2100 mm) – from summer 2014
- 1 vacuum hardening furnace and 3 vacuum tempering furnaces with 1,500 kg load capacity (max. dimensions 900 x 1200 x 900 mm)
- 2 vacuum hardening furnaces and 4 vacuum tempering furnaces with 800 kg load capacity (max. dimensions 600 x 900 x 600 mm)

"It Fits Character-Wise and Professionally."

New impulses and unchanging values amongst field staff: Young salespeople with technical and business backgrounds supplement the team. Both the existing and new team members benefit.

It's like at a get-together with old friends. You joke around, pat yourself on the shoulder, and look forward to the joint evening meal. At the on-site meeting, for which nearly every one of EschmannStahl's area sales managers* from throughout Germany has come together in Dieringhausen, people are in a good mood.

Openness for a good partnership

In his present position as an area sales manager, Dennis Kulisch is still new, but he has already been in the company since his vocational training and his ensuing job in the internal sales department. He appreciates the good working atmosphere. "It fits both character-wise and professionally", he says while Horst Wendland, one of the "old hands" in sales, adds: "That also holds true, by the way, for customer relations. At the end of the day, the human factor is very decisive for a functioning partnership with customers. If I understand my counterpart and foster openness with them, then I can respond to their needs in the best possible way. Of course, everyone has their own way of doing their job." Thus, the professional background of the colleagues → (continued on page 10)



Thomas Tillmann



Emanuel Schmidt





Michael Meisberger



Sebastian Schellenberg



Angelo Sickau



Dennis Kulisch

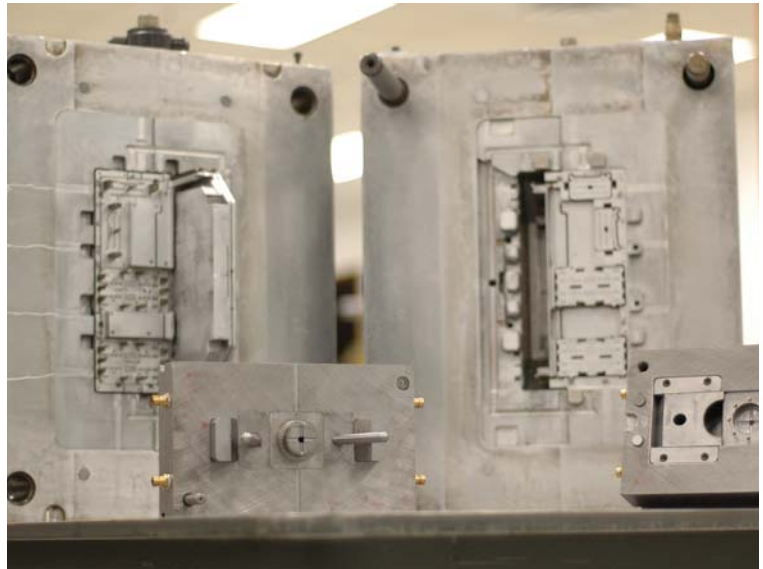


Horst Wendland



** Not pictured:
Lutz Bode (in charge of the greater
Sauerland/Siegerland area)
Peter Möhring (in charge of eastern
and north-eastern Germany)*





From the insert to the ready-made mold: the area sales managers accompany customers long-term.

are mixed: Some have more of a business background, while others are more technically oriented.

Above all, positive characters are called for when the issue is serving existing and potential customers. Thomas Tillmann mentions a further aspect: "You also have to know how the regional markets operate. In southern Germany, the situation is different from northern Germany. There is no such thing as an archetypal salesperson."

"Whether technician or businessperson", Michael Meisberger notes, "what motivates us is that we can co-create and co-decide. That is not something to be taken for granted and we appreciate that." Dennis

Kulisch adds: "That also shows in terms of low staff fluctuation, which is something that customers like, too."

Making performance transparent

Of course, at the end of the day, it is all about doing a job. But that is not an end in itself is what you hear people saying at the meeting. Everyone is interested in long-term customer relations and not in short-term business. Good advisory services and offering the right solutions for the problems of toolmakers and tool users are thus essential, "particularly as end customers such as the automotive industry are exacting higher and higher demands", Angelo Sickau explains. "We need to break these demands down into our service and tool steel."

What processing steps can customers outsource to concentrate more on their core expertise? Is there a material for a certain application that is better than the one being used for years?

Horst Wendland, for instance, can report the following from his customer dialogues: "Presently, the EschmannStahlgrade **ESPRIMUS SL** is a big topic, as customers, amongst other things, benefit from its isotropic structure. Whenever we establish a new material, we go into an intensive exchange with the respective design engineers." In regular training sessions and in

joint talks, the area sales managers get the requisite expertise for informed advice.

Ears close to the market

As the area sales managers are constantly in contact with users, they are always aware of the technical and logistical demands of everyday business. In his dialogues with customers, Michael Meisberger is always told: "At your company, there is always someone taking care of things. We feel like we are in good hands." ■

The Ideal Entry Point

Former apprentices, now long-service staff members, report on their careers at EschmannStahl.

Whether cutting machine operator, material tester or wholesale and international trade specialist – in the last few years EschmannStahl has offered numerous young people a vocational training position. Many of them are awarded a full contract after their successful apprenticeship and today are important parts of the company, from milling all the way to sales.



Desiree Noß and Benjamin Knüchel: "Learned a lot."

Perspectives through further education

Benjamin Knüchel, for example, who underwent vocational training (story in ESSENTIALS 1/2010, p. 15-16), now works as a materials tester in the Wehnrath lab. "From my very first days in vocational school to my present job has been a long way. On this path, I have been able to learn a lot and today feel in good hands. Exchanges with the many specialists on board are a constant boost", the former apprentice explains.

The same holds true for Desiree Noß. She also started as an apprentice at EschmannStahl and has now worked for the company for many years. The wholesale and international trade specialist today contributes her knowledge and expertise to sales. She, too, likes looking back: "The sound vocational training here is the ideal entry point to working life. I got to know many departments and operations and then specialized. Further education opportunities have repeatedly offered me new perspectives – it's like life-long learning." ■

Just a Bucket?

Jokey Plastik has been manufacturing plastics packaging for the filling industry for over 45 years.



He probably anticipated growth. Definitely, he hoped it would come. However, that two used injection mold machines and nine staff members on a farm on the countryside near Cologne would become a global company with a staff of 1,700 was surely not something the founder Josef Kemmerich had expected.

The story of Jokey Plastik began in 1968. Today, the company develops and produces packaging for the filling industry as a main product in over 14 locations. Technical plastics parts for electrical tools, for example, or the automotive industry as well as bathroom furniture such as mirror cabinets or steam-driven showers are also part of the product portfolio.

Shape, function, and design

Michael Schmitz, Marketing Manager and Sales Manager Germany emphasizes: "We are continuously extending our technologies and product portfolio. Numerous patents and awards confirm the innovative strength of the company. This pertains to both the shape and

function of the packaging material as well as the decorations. A good example is our plastic bucket made out of renewable raw materials and secondary raw materials. On top of that, we are one of only a handful of manufacturers who apply digital printing on packaging material." Upon this background, a seemingly simple bucket becomes a technical product, even in the eyes of an ordinary person.

High-tech and passion

"Our packaging solutions are the logical result of our process expertise in injection molding, of material competence, and creative toolmaking – in a high-tech production environment. All of this is promoted by people who are passionate about their jobs – often from vocational training to retirement", Michael Schmitz summarizes.

This is also based on the owner-operated structure of the company. Only these prerequisites, shaped over years, made it possible to satisfy customer requirements



Basis for quality: Jokey Plastik's toolmaking

INFORMATION • DETAILS • FACTS

Founded: 1968

Company location: Wipperfürth,
North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany

About 1,700 staff working at 14 production locations across the globe delivers packaging solutions for approximately 6,000 customers in different industries. Also, the company produces technical plastics as well as bathroom furniture.



with further developed products as well as meet end-consumer demands by taking their own initiative for product enhancements. One of the issues has been the trend towards continuously thinner packing material due to cost, transport, and environmental reasons. Jokey was able to meet these demands via a smooth interplay of its competence areas.

Investing in ideas

"Innovations don't are no coincidence. We invest about 40 million euros in the company annually – among other areas, in research and development. An important role here is the exchange of knowledge amongst staff, including staff from different departments, as a catalyst for ideas", is how Michael Schmitz explains the high degree of innovation.

The product range of packaging solutions now expands from 120 millimeter cans all the way to 35 liter buckets. Certain small sizes were only later added to the portfolio: In food and beverages, this is the result

of the growing trend towards single households and thus smaller portions customers buy in supermarkets.

Going beyond the company's standard products, custom mold projects are offered for tailored solutions: "Jokey Individual". In implementing individual packaging needs Jokey is a creative and competent partner at your side – in advising and development from initial ideas to marketability.

What role their own toolmaking plays for the quality of the products and what else is in the background of Jokey's products, products that are often seen as simple buckets in everyday life, is what Michael Domröse, Head of Toolmaking at Jokey, and Eduard Laskowski, responsible for process planning, purchasing, and quality management at Jokey, describe in the ESSENTIALS interview. ■



*More information on
Jokey Plastik*



Eduard Laskowski and Michael Domröse

“We Utilize EschmannStahl’s Entire Service Portfolio.”

ESSENTIALS interview with Michael Domröse and Eduard Laskowski from Jokey Plastik

ESSENTIALS: Mr. Domröse, Mr. Laskowski, what is a bucket in your eyes?

Eduard Laskowski: In a very general way, a bucket is a container for liquid products or solid loose materials. As you can imagine, we at Jokey Plastik see this topic in a more differentiated way than, for example, a consumer who simply buys a bucket full of paint.

Michael Domröse: For us as well as for manufacturers packaging their products in

buckets or comparable containers, there’s a lot more going on in the background. There are complex practical and legal requirements pertaining to shape, material, or production methods. We need to keep these in mind to ensure that a suitable product evolves, a product that satisfies both our customers and the end-consumer.

ESSENTIALS: What are the core properties required and how do you make sure these are met?

Michael Domröse: Of course the surface structure, shape, and looks play a role, particularly with respect to food and beverage packing – after all, as many senses as possible need to be addressed. A well-made packaging stages a product. Ideally, it strengthens the brand and can be a unique buying proposition for customers.

Just as important, even if less obvious, are the functional properties with respect to, for instance, filling. In this way,

we can optimize our packaging solutions for automated high-performance filling. Moreover, they are stackable and designed for palette use as well as resilient, if required, so that transport is a smooth operation. For certain filling material, barrier, compacting, and sealing properties are important, too. We define all of these requirements during our customer advisory process in order to deliver an optimal solution – optically, functionally, and cost-wise. So as to guarantee the highest possible reproducible quality, our facilities are subject to rigid quality and hygiene management and accordingly certified.

ESSENTIALS: What role does the tool steel you use play in terms of product quality?

Eduard Laskowski: Of course there are many factors influencing the quality of the packaging we produce. This holds true for the injection mold equipment and the tool steel used for that. The steel has to have a number of properties for us to be able to guarantee efficient processes at uniform quality. While something like machinability is important for our toolmaking, what counts in production are wear protection

and corrosion resistance as well as a surface finish that minimizes adhesion. The steel supplier is a factor contributing to the reproducibility of high product quality: not only regarding the delivered material, but also pertaining to other services offered. At EschmannStahl that is quite a lot: starting from sawing, moving across six-sided machining all the way to heat treatment.

Michael Domröse: Depending on our current workload, we sometimes resort to the entire performance portfolio EschmannStahl offers. In doing so, we can always count on material quality and processing. With their high degree of availability and short delivery times, EschmannStahl also helps us be able to react to short-term demands in our markets. Even if something needs to be done really quickly, we can always rely on them to deliver the steel in time – and that is very reassuring to know.

ESSENTIALS: You have been working with EschmannStahl ever since the founding of Jokey Plastik in 1968. What characterizes such a long-term business relationship?

Eduard Laskowski: It is more than a standard business relationship. Of course we are the customer and EschmannStahl the supplier, but it is a well-rehearsed partnership: we always interact in a fair and pragmatic way. The fact that we get along personally helps, too. Nevertheless, a supplier has to prove he can do it time and again as there is no guarantee. Thus, over 45 years of cooperation show that EschmannStahl is getting a lot right.

ESSENTIALS: Mr. Domröse, Mr. Laskowski, thank you for the interview. ■



Selection of Jokey Plastik's products, ranging from 120 milliliter cans up to 35 liter buckets

Helping Instead of Holidays

Andreas Filapek works in process planning at EschmannStahl's sawmill. When holiday time comes, he does not spend it in noble hotel resorts: he accompanies aid convoys across Europe. He describes his experiences for ESSENTIALS.

Who would spend their holidays in war zones? Bosnia instead of Bali, Romania instead of the Riviera. "My trips into war zones are luckily a thing of the past. That was in 1993, with my very first tour", Andreas Filapek who works in process planning at EschmannStahl's sawmill, explains. Back then, a friend had asked him whether he could support a relief operation as a truck driver. The destination was Bosnia-Herzegovina, which was at war at that time.

Convoys into war zones

To join the relief convoys as a driver Andreas Filapek regularly sacrificed his annual holiday. By now, he is getting special leave (more on that in the interview on page 18). To this day, Andreas Filapek has delivered relief goods to numerous people in many tours organized by the charitable organization called "Humanitarian Aid Overath". At the beginning, the convoys were still organized under the umbrella of the German Red Cross' Overath Chapter, until the Association was founded in April 2002. According to its statutes, "the purpose of the Association is to support people in need and those bearing misery inside and outside Germany." By the time of its founding, about 5,000 tons of relief goods had already been brought to the Croatian part of Bosnia in 18 convoys aimed at easing acute hardships and contributing to rebuilding.

Exclusively shipments of goods

Volunteers like Andreas Filapek exclusively ship goods and no money. These are goods such as hospital beds





Impressions from the operations

Top: The goods are transported to the needy in convoys.

Center: The team of Humanitarian Aid Overath

Bottom: Numerous helping hands in the field

and furniture as well as bicycles and clothing or even roof tiles. On location, the Association's members distribute the goods either themselves or in collaboration with the local Caritas Chapter and local organizations working with the Red Cross.

"We receive support from many people, whereby we could always be receiving more", Andreas Filapek notes. "But it is astonishing what we can put together every time. The will to help is basically there, but many people simply don't know whom to contact. People want to make sure their donations arrive at the right place." As the delivered goods are so basic, criminals do not even attempt to do business with them. "Of course, a one hundred percent guarantee can never be given. But as we usually distribute the goods ourselves and evaluate successful distribution in the aftermath, our aid almost never ends up in the wrong hands", Andreas Filapek explains.

Bosnia, Croatia, Romania

After only driving down to Bosnia (Vucovar) and later Croatia (Gospic) in the first few years, convoys have been heading across to Romania for a few years now, starting in 2005. In the wake of a flood catastrophe in the region, seven fully loaded trucks went to Deva to deliver relief goods to a Franciscan monastery that takes up street kids and orphans, feeds them, and provides them with schooling.

Before going to a new destination, Association members visit the possible locations and organizations in advance scouting tours. This way, helpers get an idea of whether assistance is really needed and what is most urgently required. Irrespective of the area, be it a former war zone or an area hit by a catastrophe, Andreas Filapek stresses that "there are many more needy people than you think. Only because you don't hear much in the media, it doesn't mean that there is no poverty. Every one of us can make a big contribution to helping these people with only a little input." ■



"I Started by Chance – now I'm Already Helping out for over 20 Years."



Andreas Filapek talking to ESSENTIALS

Andreas Filapek's commitment for relief work started with a tour to the then war zone of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Today, humanitarian aid is a part of his life. In the interview he talks about the support he gets from friends, colleagues, and EschmannStahl's management.

ESSENTIALS: Mr. Filapek, how does one get to drive to Bosnia-Herzegovina in the midst of the terrible war in the Balkans, as you did about 20 years ago?

Because of my truck driver's license. A friend of mine knew that I had a license to drive big trucks and asked me whether I could assist a relief transport as a driver. Actually, there was a lot speaking against it: I hadn't driven for a long time, the trip was to a war zone, and I had to sacrifice my holidays. But I decided to do it anyway and have never regretted it.

ESSENTIALS: What led you to repeatedly continue to help in the following years?

It is really great to see the impact of the help and how thankful the people are. When we look at former Yugoslavia don't we always tend to think: 'the war is over so that means they are no longer in dire

straits.' But some people there are still dependent on the help. Thus, the positive experiences I made are quite unforgettable. But not only that: I have made many friends in the course of time. It really welds you together when you are on the road in a convoy for days.

ESSENTIALS: To organize convoys of ten and more trucks requires an enormous logistical and financial effort. How are these tours set up?

Beyond the donated items, we depend on sponsors, starting with trucks, storage areas, foodstuffs, and fuel all the way to banana cartons for packaging. We have had years in which we weren't able to deliver all the goods because we didn't have enough trucks. By the way, I receive donations in kind from all over the place nowadays. My colleagues here at EschmannStahl know about my work and continue to bring along things we can make use of. The management supports me as well: I regularly get special leave to do these trips. I and the people at our destinations are very grateful for that. It's a great feeling to know that the company supports this good cause.

ESSENTIALS: If one doesn't want to join the convoy straight away: How can they offer help in another way?

On the website of 'Humanitarian Aid Overath' (Humanitäre Hilfe Overath) you

can get information on the Association (see box below right, editor's note). What you can find there are the right people to contact and membership application forms as well as press reports and pictures of past trips.

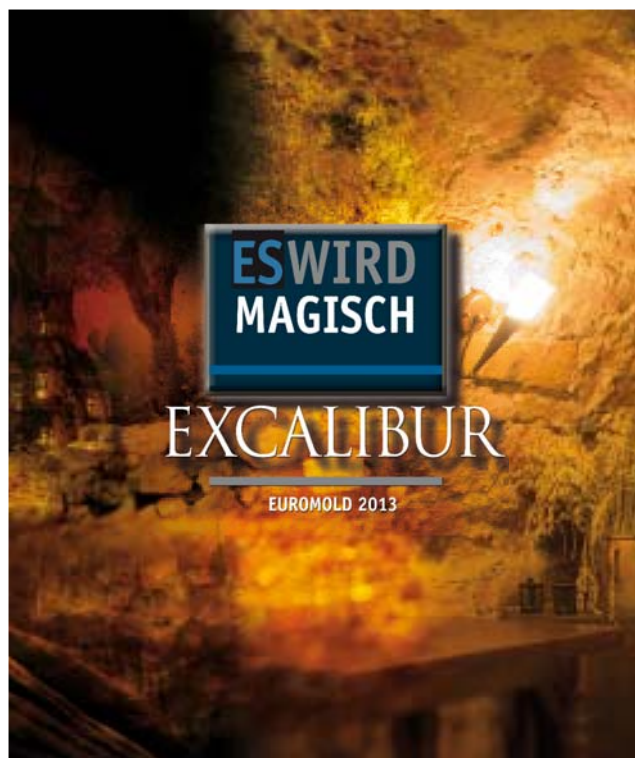
ESSENTIALS: Mr. Filapek, thank you for the interview. ■

YOU CAN HELP



More information at
www.hhov.de

IN BRIEF



ES WIRD MAGISCH – Euromold 2013

“ES wird magisch” – this is the magical motto under which EschmannStahl is framing its appearance at the EuroMold this year. This time, the magician LOSANDER, who has impressed many visitors with his tricks for years, will be supported by an assistant.

Visitors can also experience magical moments with the raffling off of an iPad mini. An iPad mini can be won every evening. Anyone who has filled in a respective coupon can participate in the raffle.

In the aftermath of the trade fair, the winners will be adequately portrayed in a press report. And in the next edition of ESSENTIALS, there will be a detailed story on the results of the EuroMold 2013. ■

Should you have any questions on our product and service portfolio please contact your respective field staff member or dial:

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Planned Topics

- For Special Requirements – Overview of the EschmannStahlgrades
- Outsource Capacities, Increase Efficiency – **SPFINE** and **SPSTANDARD**



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