

# Thuringia Focus



Presentation of the awards at Dorint-Hotel Weimar: Prof. Luk N. Van Wassenhove, Director INSEAD Humanitarian Research Group; Andreas Engling, General Manager MDC Power GmbH; and Member of the Jury Prof. Arnd Huchzermeier (from left to right). Source: EUROFORUM Deutschland

## Thuringia – home to Germany’s best factory

**MDC Power, an automotive manufacturer in Kölldeda, Thuringia, has won Germany’s 2014 ‘Best Factory’ industrial excellence award. It has been awarded on the occasion of the 11th *WirtschaftsWoche* Conference in Weimar.**

A wholly owned subsidiary of Daimler AG, MDC Power has been producing four-cylinder engines for Mercedes-Benz and its high-performance division, AMG, since 2003.

Being the German winner means that MDC Power ranks with the best in the world in one of the top international competitions in the industrial and services sectors. “It’s very prestigious to be recognized in this way,” said Dr. Sven Breitschwerdt, the then Managing Director of MDC. “All 1,700 of us, from managers in their offices to assembly workers on the factory floor, work hard every day to keep our growing company efficient. Being singled out as the ‘best company’ is very encouraging and will make us even more motivated”. The panel of judges comprised experts from the busi-

ness schools WHU Otto Beisheim, INSEAD and *WirtschaftsWoche*, a German business magazine. After visiting the MDC factory, the judges said they were particularly impressed with the consistent focus on core processes, the exemplary way in which responsibilities were divided between personnel and the high degree of flexibility.

Companies that enter the ‘Best Factory’ competition are evaluated according to criteria relating to performance that is above average and sustainable, with particular attention being paid to how they implement their corporate strategy in all areas. From key performance indicators to staff engagement to corporate culture, the ‘Best Factory’ recognizes the entire spectrum of factors that make a business successful. (td)

### News

**Gotha – Kappstein GmbH & Co. KG**, an Australian manufacturer of innovative bicycle components, has located in Gotha. The company produces gears, sprockets and electrical drives in a production hall refurbished by LEG Thüringen to meet its specific requirements. “Gotha has everything – location, a good environment for production, skilled workers and easy access to road, rail and air transport,” said managing director, Christian Gerlach, at the opening ceremony. Kappstein will eventually have up to 25 staff working at its Gotha site.

**Gotha – Avery Dennison Materials GmbH**, one of the first US companies to set up in Thuringia, back in 1997, is to invest further in Gotha, spending EUR 8 million on creating a double-coated silicone adhesive line and an additional cutting area, as well as a new dispatch hall. The 120 staff will be joined by 20 new staff members. Avery Dennison is a world leader in labeling and packaging materials and solutions and is represented in more than 50 countries by a total of 26,000 staff.

**Hermisdorf – Siebert Thinfilm Technology GmbH** now has an extra 5,000 m<sup>2</sup> of production space, including 650 m<sup>2</sup> of cleanroom. Its new production hall in Hermisdorf, built at a cost of EUR 7 million, has also resulted in the creation of 25 jobs. The company has been manufacturing precision electronic components in thin film technology since 1992. Its standard products and made-to-order components are put to use in sensing, precision resistor technology and performance coating for products used in industrial automation, measurement and control technology and the aerospace industries.

**i** News

**Meiningen** – New machinery and a new production hall – **Weisskopf Werkzeuge GmbH** is expanding its production in Meiningen to the tune of EUR 6.5 million. The investment will create a further 18 permanent jobs and shows yet again how the innovative, quality products being produced by small- and medium-sized companies in Thuringia have won the state a reputation as a place where business and technology excel. International companies in the automotive, aviation, engineering and toolmaking sectors, such as Robert Bosch, Thyssen-Krupp, Continental, Brose, Sandvik and INA Schaeffler know and appreciate the value of Weisskopf's carbide and diamond tools.

**Erfurt** – Latin America was the topic of the 8th Thuringian Foreign Trade Day (Außenwirtschaftstag). Particular focus was put on Brazil, Argentina and the Pacific Alliance with the economies of Chile, Mexico, Colombia, Peru and Costa Rica. Business people from Thuringia met experts from each sub-region to find out how to access their markets. Another expert panel informs about export financing and credit guarantees, being critical topics for companies when entering emerging markets.

**i** Dates

› 26–29 JANUARY 2015

Arab Health – The biggest trade fair for medical technology and hospital equipment and fit-outs in the MENA (Middle East and North Africa) region International Convention & Exhibition Centre, Dubai

› 10–12 February 2015

SPIE Photonics West – The biggest North American trade fair for laser, optics and optical electronics Moscone Center, San Francisco

› 16–20 March 2015

CeBIT – Business IT Show and Conference. Hanover Exhibition Grounds

## Industrie 4.0 – Smart Manufacturing from ‘Down Under’ comes to Thuringia

Industrial companies everywhere are being challenged on all fronts, but the German government's INDUSTRIE 4.0, part of its 2020 High-Tech Strategy, offers a vision for the future.

Production is becoming increasingly digital – and also needs to be even more networked, to enable data acquisition and management and make it possible to control production processes. Networking production has many advantages, to name but two: production becomes more flexible and products can be individualized thanks to IT-based variant management and integrated quality control. **Delta Shelving Systems GmbH**, which recently commenced production in Gotha, combines these very things. Australian Stephen Eddowes was looking for the perfect location in which to

expand his company, which was established in Sydney in 1984. He looked to Germany because of the size of the market and proximity to his customers and eventually chose the state of Thuringia because it is not only in the middle of Germany but also in the middle of Europe. And so the production of an innovative shelving and storage system is soon to begin in this state, entirely in the spirit of Industrie 4.0. The Smart Factory's e-commerce platform will make products that are ‘Made in Germany’ even more individual by involving customers to an unprecedented extent. (*maa*)

## Thuringian companies explore Asian markets

A business delegation from Thuringia visited Malaysia and Singapore from 3 to 7 November last year. Malaysia is playing an increasingly significant role in ASEAN, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, and together with its neighbor Singapore, offers Thuringian businesses good export opportunities.

The itinerary included briefings at the various sites visited as well as individualized visits to selected companies and interviews with their representatives, so that delegates not only gained an overview of the Malaysian and Singaporean markets but were also introduced to potential key contact people. Delegates also made the most of events at which they had the opportunity to talk to people from German companies already operating in both markets about opportunities and their experiences. Other important parts of the itinerary included the opening of an office in Malaysia that will represent Thuringia and support the ongoing work of making contacts and initiating new business. Members of the Chamber of Industry and Commerce in Erfurt and southern Thuringia and representatives of LEG, the State Development Corporation of Thuringia, accompanied the 16-member delegation. (*maa*)



With a height of 452m, the Petronas Towers in Kuala Lumpur tower above the Malaysian metropolis. The construction of the twin towers took six years and today they are the ninth tallest building in the world.

Source: LEG Thüringen/private

## More research and development: Glatt Ingenieurtechnik expands its premises



Since 1991 Glatt Ingenieurtechnik has been operating in Weimar. Today a staff of 130 is employed there.  
Source: Glatt Ingenieurtechnik GmbH

The positive economic climate has enabled Glatt Ingenieurtechnik in Weimar to expand its production capacity. The company is investing approximately EUR 4.2 million in building new laboratory and technical areas and employing more people. The expansion marks Glatt's entry into a new field of activity.

The development was carried out in record time – only eight months elapsed between the making of the decision and the topping out ceremony. The company's plans for the immediate future are equally ambitious, as the extension for production of, and research into, innovative powder technologies is slated to be ready by March this year.

“This investment provides very clear evidence of the way political leadership can stimulate the economy to promote innovation and ensure that the state of Thuringia continues to provide attractive jobs,” said Dr. Arnulf Wulff, Senior Vice President of LEG, the State Development Corporation of Thuringia, at the topping out ceremony.

Glatt Ingenieurtechnik, which designs and builds facilities for manufacturing granules and pellets from powders or liquids, has a staff of about 130 in Weimar. Worldwide, the Glatt Group has branches throughout Europe and in India, Russia and the United States, with more than 1,500 employees. (td)

### **i** Technology News

**Weimar** – A new test for Ebola that is already in use in Africa comes from Weimar. Testing strips made by Senova detect the presence or absence of the virus with 95-percent accuracy, faster and more easily than ever. It takes less than 30 minutes, does not require electricity or laboratory technical facilities and uses a simple throat smear or urine sample to detect a protein that indicates the deadly disease. Senova strips proved themselves in Congo when they were evaluated there in 2004.

**Weimar** – Thuringian business and research association pades – partikeldesign thüringen has become eligible for further support after becoming one of the German government's 'Innovative Regional Growth Centers'. The 13 companies and four research institutes from the Erfurt-Weimar-Jena region will receive extra funding to boost innovation in materials and technology. The Ministry of Education and Research will direct EUR 12.2 million into the association's projects over the next three years putting it well on the way for its goal of being one of the world's largest manufacturer of functionalized particle systems by 2022.

## Thuringian innovations up with the best in the world

**Of the 79 companies that competed for the 2014 Thuringian Innovation Prize last year, six were honored for their prolific good ideas. With EUR 100,000 in prize money up for grabs, this state's innovation prize is one of the most worthwhile in Germany.**

The competition is organized by the Thuringian Ministry of the Economy, the 'Foundation for Technology, Innovation and Research Thuringia' (STIFT), TÜV Thüringen (an international service pro-

vider which focuses on consulting, testing, certification and training) and the Ernst Abbe Foundation. There were prizes in each of four categories, a special prize for start-ups and the Ernst Abbe Prize for Innovative Entrepreneurship. As well, Martin Schilling from 3D Schilling GmbH in Sondershausen was delighted to receive an award for his services to science and technology in Thuringia. The innovation prizes for 2014 went to Rennsteig-Werkzeuge GmbH from Viernau, Matesy GmbH from Jena,

Kids Interactive GmbH from Erfurt and Carl Zeiss Microscopy GmbH from Jena. Another Jena company, oncgnostics GmbH, won the special prize for start-ups for the diagnostic test it developed for the early recognition of cervical cancer. The judges used criteria including innovativeness, functionality, practical value and economic success. Entries had to be developed in Thuringia and be on the market already or about to be launched, with realistic prospects. (td)

## Austrian invests in Oberhof



In Germany, Oberhof is well-known as a winter sports and holiday region. With the new hotel complex the Thuringian winter sports center aims to become an internationally renowned tourist destination.

Source: Thüringer Tourismus GmbH/Andreas Weise

A new hotel is planned for Oberhof, a winter sport and holiday destination in the Thuringian Forest. The first DoIT Hotel & Resort will be built in the center of Oberhof, close to the H2Oberhof wellness pool and spa. Austrian hotel developer Manfred Lengauer and his team are planning a complex with 150 rooms and suites, to be opened in December 2016.

The entire complex will reflect themes of nature and use products from the region, with timber as the main construction material. It is expected to attract active people who enjoy the outdoors and are looking for top-class accommodation. Lengauer says he chose Oberhof because it is an exciting challenge, and that the state of Thuringia provided an ideal situation for an investor. *(td)*

## Germany's top managers love Weimar

**Weimar and Erfurt are on the list of cities whose residents enjoy a pleasant, attractive and cultural environment, according to a national survey of 5,000 companies in 100 independent towns and cities conducted by the Cologne Institute for Economic Research (IW).**

Weimar is Number One on the list in terms of cultural leisure activities, which achieved a 100-percent satisfaction rate. The state capital of Erfurt is Number Two, followed by the major cities of Dresden, Hamburg and Munich.

As the survey also shows, an attractive environment as far as cultural, sporting

and leisure activities are concerned is particularly important to managers and is increasingly influencing where they choose to reside. Young managers and their families are moving to cities that feature 'soft' location factors. LEG, the State Development Corporation of Thuringia, can confirm the reality of this trend, as it has always mentioned the state's attractive lifestyle to investors and skilled workers who are deciding where to go. These days, people do not just consider the workplace and their contract; they also want a wide range of services and options for their families and leisure time. *(td)*

## Thuringian detectives 'on the job' in cult television series

Thuringia now has two teams of investigators hot on the trail of criminals in Germany's long-running, hugely popular television series *Tatort* (Scene of the Crime). The series is filmed in some of the nation's largest cities, including Hamburg, Munich, Leipzig, Cologne, Stuttgart, Frankfurt and Dortmund – and now also in Erfurt and Weimar. The first two Thuringia episodes, which

screened in November and December 2013 on the ARD channel, were filmed in places like Petersberg, Erfurt and the former central police station in Weimar. Sequels were screened at the end of last year and beginning of this year and watched by millions. The third *Tatort* from Weimar is already in the planning and will be filmed later this year. *(td)*

### **i** Dates

› 27 March – 19 April 2015

#### **Thuringian Bach Weeks**

Concerts and events at various locations

**@** [www.thueringer-bachwochen.de](http://www.thueringer-bachwochen.de)

› 29 March 2015 – 19 July 2015

#### **Bild und Botschaft (Image and Message)**

Ducal Museum in Gotha, and other events associated with the anniversary of the painter Lucas Cranach



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