



CONNECT MAGAZIN

EDUARD KRONENBERG GmbH
Haan | Germany

**PRODUCT
ENVIRONMENT
INSIDE
BUSINESS
QUALITY
PEOPLE
ARCHITECTURE
LIFESTYLE**

Edition
40



CONNECT MAGAZIN

Dear Readers!

In the latest issue of EK Connect, you will find a colorful bouquet of topics for stimulating reading: topics relating to EK, such as certification in accordance with the current environmental management standard, which is also important for customer policy, or the effective anti-corona measures in place in our company. By the way, for those who have not yet finished planning their holiday and are in the mood for a unique mountain panorama in the South Tyrolean Dolomites as well as a really beautiful place to stay can check up on the 'Mirror Houses' here in advance.

Or do some rowing at home, perhaps – and doing it in style on the WaterRower. Our report on this piece of indoor sports equipment, which is not only extremely popular at the moment, but is also the starting signal for our new series about products that cannot be appreciated enough as true design and technology legends.

We hope you enjoy reading the latest issue of our magazine

Your
EK-Team

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+++ IN BRIEF +++

EK SUPPORTS THE EFFORTS ORGANISED BY THE HAAN LIONS CLUB

The Haan Lions Club organized a successful sale of "flood wine" from the Peter Lingen vineyards for the benefit of the Ahr valley flood victims. EK was able to help in terms of both the organization of the sale and the logistics.

■ <https://haan.lions.de/>



Tanja Lingen (Lingen vineyards) and Ralf M. Kronenberg (Lions Club Haan)

EK CONNECT GEORGIAN BAR ACCESSORIES: ALL THE BENEFITS AT A GLANCE

With the new innovative connecting elements of the EK POLO Connect NXT series, EK is expanding its product portfolio for insulating glass Georgian bars to better meet its customers' needs (cf. Connect magazine 39/2021). The high-precision connectors of the NXT series are designed to provide ideal solutions as cross connectors and end pieces for a wide range of Georgian bars, such as the 76 Georgian bar, the 2000 Georgian bar and the Adria series. This section provides an overview of some of the product benefits of our EK Georgian bar connectors.



Schematic representation: window (l.) with internal Georgian bars (Deko / Swiss Georgian bar), window (r.) with surface-mounted version (duplex / Viennese Georgian bar)

Profiles & EK-solutions	EK POLO CONNECT		EK STEEL CONNECT
	STANDARD	NXT	CLAMP
Duplex aluminium cross connectors	✓	✓	-
Duplex aluminium end pieces	✓	✓	✓
Alu Spacers / steel cross connectors	✓	-	-
Standard Alu / steel end pieces	✓	-	-
Helima Georgian bar 76 end pieces	-	✓	✓
Helima Georgian bar 2000 end pieces	-	✓	✓
Profilglass Adria Adria end pieces	-	✓	✓
Profilglass Venezia cross connectors	-	-	✓
Profilglass Venezia end pieces	-	✓	✓



Cross connectors

Optimum grip due to lamellas

Anti-rattle bellows

Anti-rattle spring

NXT series

End pieces

with guide for bolts/screws

Easy insertion
and tight fit (all)

Clamps
with guide for rivets / screws

Extra stability
(carbon steel with galvanic zinc coating)



EK CERTIFICATION TO ISO 14001 ENVIRONMENT MANAGEMENT STANDARD

Customer focus and environmental protection are at the forefront of EK's corporate policy. The consistent focus on these two corporate goals was reflected in the introduction of the EK Quality Management System, which has long been certified, and the new EK Environmental Management System, which was also officially certified recently.

A modern and innovative industrial company like EK has been committed to the sustainable environmental compatibility of all its products and processes in its corporate policy for years. In the climate targets set out there, we have committed ourselves to reducing emissions, to save energy and resources and to contribute to the preservation of biodiversity.



EK's environmental management department, headed up by Axel Bonow, guarantees that we achieve the goals we have set ourselves. The experienced safety engineer was responsible for the 2-day review of EK's environmental management system that took place in mid-August 2021.

Evidence of EK's environmental and customer orientation

An accredited auditor from TÜV Rheinland conducted an audit of our environment management system to determine whether it meets the internationally recognized requirements laid down in the ISO 14001 standards – and whether our company's sustainable approach to the environment can be confirmed by a certificate that can be viewed by suppliers and customers alike. As official confirmation of EK's environmental and customer focus, as it were. "EK completed the entire certification audit successfully and the official confirmation will soon be available for download on our website," says Axel Bonow.

On his tour of our company, the certification auditor inspected the hazardous materials warehouse, checked the legal conformity of the technical systems, and looked at the evidence verifying that raw materials are in fact segregated, for example. He took great interest in the CO2 shutdown and with it the energy-saving compressed air shut-off system of our machines and plant technology, which was shown to him and explained in detail. As a critical inspector, he repeatedly sought serious discussions with EK colleagues: Whether they had been informed about the company's environmental goals? How do they implement these goals on a daily basis? In the end, the successful completion of the audit demonstrates clearly that EK, supported by the determination of its employees to achieve the goals, is probably moving towards an environmentally sound future. This is an excellent way of moving forward that will ultimately prove to be of benefit to us all!

ISO 14001

... is the internationally recognized standard for environmental management systems (EMS). Published in 1996 by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and last revised in 2015, it defines the requirements for an EMS with which an organization can improve its environmental performance, comply with the legal obligations and achieve environmental goals. In Germany, some 8,000 organizations have their environmental management systems certified to ISO 14001.

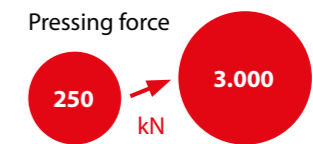
[Source: German Environment Agency]



EK IS INVESTING IN HUNDREDS OF TONES OF PRESSING FORCE

Even the best maintained machinery and system technology at EK needs to be overhauled on a regular basis and completely replaced when necessary with the latest upgrade. Then the representatives of a new generation of automatic stamping machines moves into our production area. Current examples of this recurring investment in new pressing force are the stamping and forming presses from the renowned manufacturers Haulick & Roos and Yamada, which are highly regarded at EK for their proven performance.

EK recently invested in additional new punching machines with a pressing force of 80 and 100 tones. This means that our company can now provide a substantial backup for higher tonnages in this area as well. The automatic presses are now integrated into our MDE system and have already completed their successful start-up phase in series production. Ralf M. Kronenberg explains the background to this investment: "As far as the capacity utilization of our automatic stamping machines is concerned, our aim is always to have sufficient reserves available, even at peak production times, that will enable us to respond flexibly to any additional requirements at any time."



Incidentally, the tones of new pressing force that are now available will not only be used for 'heavy-duty' forming processes. As a result of our in-house optimization, they are capable of handling a variety of much more complex tools with additional forming steps that can also be fitted to these machines. For example, both the universal layout and the table size have been significantly extended once again and a modification has been made in the form of a larger flywheel to achieve the 100-tones pressing force required even at lower speeds.



EK MEASURES TO COMBAT THE CORONAVIRUS

Since the end of last year and the beginning of 2021, testing and vaccinations to combat the coronavirus have become a part of everyday life. EK is also committed to participating in the measures to contain the virus. The success of its efforts speaks for itself - or rather: for the consistent health policy of our company!



Good planning for the best care

Even during the peak of the coronavirus crisis, EK always ensured that its customer focus was not neglected as its key corporate goal. Maintaining the ability to deliver in order to secure supplies to our customers remained the focus of our efforts throughout the entire period. As a result, EK has probably come through the crisis better than many other companies. The reasons can be put together very quickly:

- Right at the beginning of the pandemic, the highly professional expertise of EK's purchasing and resource management guaranteed fast, short-term coverage of demand for strategically important materials required for production, such as steel strip and various synthetic materials.
- The tremendous bonus of trust that EK enjoys with virtually all of its suppliers is not only a guarantee of close and constructive relations with suppliers, but also of the long-term scheduling of materials of up to one year in advance.
- EK's logistics give us plenty of room to maneuver due to the rapid creation of new storage capacities, including equipping our storage facilities with appropriate shelving systems.

When the first signs of the pandemic were identified in 2020, EK was one of the advocates of the measures recommended by the Federal Health Office and the Robert Koch Institute. To begin with, we doubled and tripled the hygiene measures already in place in the company - including the provision of countless touch-free hygiene dispensers. When the politicians and medical experts considered the use of medical mouth and nose masks to be a beneficial measure, EK purchased this effective means of protecting the health of its employees at its own expense. EK also ensured strict compliance with the so-called AHA rules (maintaining social distance, observing hygiene and wearing masks) in all parts of the building and by all employees. At the same time, we promoted the option for colleagues to work at home at an early stage, provided this did not conflict with business operations, and made intensive use of communication via online meetings, which it still going on. Since it was first permitted, EK employees have been offered an in-house test twice a week. And finally, EK made it possible for all employees to take advantage of the long-awaited vaccination offer with no red tape.

The flood disaster

... in North Rhine-Westphalia and Rhineland-Palatinate has also affected EK suppliers. EK is in close contact with the affected companies in order to continue to guarantee production for our customers.



EK IMPROVES DELIVERY RELIABILITY PERFORMANCE AND EFFICIENCY

EK's excellent product quality and a high level of delivery reliability have always been the two most important performance characteristics for sustainable customer satisfaction. Nevertheless, EK has also always consistently pursued a corporate philosophy of always wanting to make good things better. So, in order to improve its delivery reliability even further, EK initiated the OTD/OEE performance program.

After getting the EK team coaches responsible involved and informing the entire workforce of the goals to be achieved, the program was launched in January 2021. The first step was to explain the importance of the key performance indicators of OTD (On Time Delivery) and OEE (Overall Equipment Effectiveness) for assessing a company's delivery performance and supply chain efficiency. This was necessary, because, generally speaking, delivery reliability and quality are influenced to a large degree by the planning and their effective implementation in production. Since the availability

and the efficiency of the machines, in addition to the quality are factors that influence both delivery reliability and production quality, these three criteria are used to determine the relevant key performance parameters.

The interim report is proof enough: EK is on the right track

It is quite obvious, therefore, that the main factors for achieving the desired increase in performance at EK are to be found in shortening the set-up processes and reducing tooling rework. In addition, further optimization in terms of the number of strokes, greater flexibility in machine utilization and strengthening the resource management organization is now being incorporated into current projects.

The first interim report on the goals achieved to date was published in May 2021. Among other things, it included more effective communication measures that were recently introduced, such as team boards in logistics and production to provide members of the departments with details of the latest figures quickly and in a direct manner, and the newly introduced daily production meetings.



What do OTD and OEE mean?

OTD stands for 'On Time Delivery': this key performance indicator defines the delivery reliability in terms of completing an order on time. OEE stands for 'Overall Equipment Effectiveness': this key performance indicator is a measure of manufacturing productivity.

Ralf M. Kronenberg, who closely supervises the OTD/OEE performance program, is satisfied with the results that have already been achieved: "All the relevant key figures without exception point in the right direction. My thanks must go to the highly motivated EK staff and all the team and project leaders responsible. We will continue to systematically drive this positive trend in the coming months."

IN FOCUS: HEIKE CORSTEN ...

Heike Corsten from EK Human Resources knows exactly what she wants. And what she doesn't. For example, not to go on extensive business trips every month, as she did in her previous job as head of human resources. And not to become annoyed by teammates cheating at golf tournaments.

By contrast, Ms Corsten really enjoys her work at EK and with her colleagues. The payroll clerk describes her typical daily routine as typically different. There is certainly some routine work to be done, such as dealing with certificates for parental leave or listing special features in the monthly payroll. But if someone stops her with a question on a personnel matter as she's walking through the building, she takes the time to listen carefully to what her colleague is saying. "I approach them all with respect and an open ear if they want to discuss something with me. And I do what I can to help with whatever requests or concerns they may have."

The trained industrial clerk learned her profession from the bottom up in a Solingen metal company: from financial accounting and cost control to payroll accounting and human resources. Afterwards, she was given personnel responsibility for around 100 employees of a nationwide forwarding agency at Düsseldorf Airport for 8 years. The job came with stressful commuting between her home town of Solingen and exhausting journeys to the company's various locations. "When the head office there was closed, I asked myself if I wanted to continue doing this. I didn't! I dropped into a lower gear. And I am perfectly happy with the decision I made." Heike Corsten has been with EK now since the beginning of 2019.

She and her husband live in an apartment with a garden they own in the southern part of Solingen. The long-distance trips to California, where the couple used to visit friends quite frequently in recent years, including trips to Las Vegas and San Diego, are over for the time being due to the pandemic. Instead, Sylt in northern Germany and Lake Tegernsee in Bavaria have increasingly become the focus of the two passionate golfers. By the way - cheating at a golf tournament? "A golfer appears to be looking for his ball, drops it when his opponent isn't watching and then pretends to act surprised. I don't need to do something like that - I only play with my husband and our friends!" Heike Corsten quite simply knows what she wants.



... AND BERND REIFFENBERG

Bernd Reiffenberg took up his post as the new coach of the EK logistics team in May 2020. In the middle of the first months of the pandemic and in the middle of short-time working. Not exactly the perfect conditions for showing what you're capable of after taking up a new job from one minute to the next?

Today, Bernd Reiffenberg smiles at the question. Then, however, the major car manufacturers completely shut down production in the first wave of the pandemic, while orders from the glass industry continued to come in more or less unchanged as before. The first thing suppliers like EK and their new logistics team coach had to do was come to terms with these massive order postponements. Despite short-time working. And despite the fact that as a team leader he already knew the finely balanced process systematics of EK logistics down to the last detail. "That was a serious challenge. For both the team and for me," says Bernd Reiffenberg, looking back: "But we delivered. And yes, we demonstrated what we can achieve together!"



Since 2005, the qualified freight forwarding specialist has held a number of managerial positions in shipping, warehousing and logistics in various industrial companies. As far as he's concerned, supporting his colleagues in his ten-member EK team to the best of his ability is an integral part of how he sees himself as a manager. This means he starts his day early in the morning walking through the large production hall, checking to make sure that the raw materials and packaging are where they should be and chatting with individual employees in his department – and not just about current problems. "Starting up conversations like that with an open mind and, above all, listening. It's not only crucial for my work. As I see it, it's important overall for maintaining good personal relations with others."

Back home in Düsseldorf, where Bernd Reiffenberg was also born, he relaxes with meditative breathing exercises. Or, alternatively, he puts on some socially critical hip hop from the 80s, from Public Enemy or the Beastie Boys, for example, which he considers to be truly authentic, because it's played hard and loud. Or, as a passionate BMX rider, you'll find him either preparing his next session in the skate park or planning the next holiday on his favorite island, Formentera. Bernd Reiffenberg has fallen so deeply in love with the island since his first visit in 1997 that he's visited the island once a year since then. At least! The extraordinary beaches with a Caribbean flair make it absolutely impossible not to relax there every time.

MIRROR, MIRROR ... IN SOUTH TYROL

It's just the right moment for a little time out. So, where should we go? To the mountains – where you'll find a beautiful climate – and culinary sophistication. After a few thoughts, South Tyrol is definitely the perfect destination. But will you find any modern inspiring architecture there, besides classic hotels and holiday flats? The answer, of course, is - yes, you can - the Mirror Houses.

Outside Bolzano, you'll find these luxurious holiday homes located amidst acre upon acre of apple orchards. The owners themselves actually live in a renovated farmhouse on the grounds, surrounded by the spectacular mountain panorama of the Dolomites. Their idea: they wanted to design and build a pair of holiday homes back in 2014 to offer their guests – 2 to 4 guests each – a small autonomous apartment. The challenge: maximum privacy – both for the guests and the hosts.

Generally speaking, of course, the houses should be something quite special - an attraction. To create all this, the young South Tyrolean architect Peter Pichler was hired, the same man who founded „Peter Pichler Architecture“ in Milan in 2015 and was in the process of making a name for himself. A perfect appointment, as it turned out.

Happiness lies behind the mirror – and in front

Peter Pichler, who had already worked in renowned architectural firms such as Zaha Hadid Architects in London and OMA / Rem Koolhaas in Rotterdam during his studies for a number of highly ambitious clients had a very clear picture of what his discerning clients might like.

He outlined the idea behind his Mirror Houses: both holiday homes, including their private gardens, face east. Each unit has a living room with an open kitchen, a bathroom and a bedroom. The living units are slightly offset in height and length, which tends to break up the rigidity of the structure and emphasizes individuality.

Because the houses stand on a plinth, they seem to be floating above the ground and offer a spectacular view of the magnificent landscape around them from their free-standing terraces. The spacious interior opens up to the east with a large glass façade that fades into the black aluminium shell in the shape of an arch. “The mirrored glass on the west façade of the two units borders the client’s garden and captures the surrounding panorama with the pool, while the units themselves merge with the surroundings”.



Modern, “floating” architecture: inside and out.
© Oskar Dariz



Reduced and dynamic: front and entrance to the houses.
© Oskar Dariz



The 'Mirror Houses' in the midst of South Tyrolean apple orchards
© Oskar Dariz



At one with landscape and nature: the mirror façade to the garden with pool
© Tiberio Sorvillo

The architect Peter Pichler

... was nominated by the Italian National Chamber of Architects as a Young Italian Talent and was a finalist for the Gold Medal for Architecture at the Triennale di Milano and the Dezeen Awards for Emerging Architect of the Year. He is also representing his home region of South Tyrol in Italy in the new South Tyrol global campaign. The campaign can be seen not only in the Italian media, but will also be broadcast in Germany on ARD, ZDF, Sat1 and Pro7 as well as in the print media DER SPIEGEL and DIE ZEIT until the end of November 2021.

- www.mirror-houses.com
- www.peterpichler.com

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY LEGENDS: THE WATERROWER

There are products, the mere sight of which inevitably gives rise to the desire to own one. Because they have a unique character. Because they have an inherent aesthetic that goes far beyond mere use. Because they anticipate the technical progress of their time due to their outstanding functionality. Design and technology legends that we would like to introduce here in no particular order. Like the WaterRower.

The idea of pulling on the oar at home with the help of a rowing ergometer has been around since the end of the 19th century. From the 1950s onwards, machines with iron wheels and magnetic resistance were developed for the first time, which were then replaced at the beginning of the 1980s by rowing ergometers that for the first time worked with air resistance and had a movable seat mounted on a rail. What all the training devices lacked, however, was the unique sensual sensation that only comes from real rowing with the pull of the sculls, the oar blades, through the water.

Until John Duke came along. The former Yale University rower and member of the US national team developed his idea of a convincing rowing ergometer in 1988. With an idea that was ingenious as it was simple and an innovative design that ultimately developed into a cult, he designed the WaterRower - an indoor rowing machine that simulates real rowing on water that was as close to the real thing as possible. The WaterRower received the prestigious Plus X Award for its unique design and is the only piece of sports equipment to date to stand in London's Design Museum.

This is how the luxury ergometer works

The unique feature of this completely new rowing ergometer is a WaterFlywheel that uses an ergonomically shaped paddle to creates the sense of virtually rowing across water. The rower feels the paddle in the water via the cable and the water resistance authentically simulates rowing: this creates a soft and natural rowing sensation, an effect that is further enhanced by the quiet rhythmic swishing sound of the water. Incidentally, the resistance does not have to be set manually, since it is determined solely by the force exerted during indoor rowing. It goes without saying, of course, that the WaterRower also has a small monitor on board, which, when connected to a PC and with the help of free software, displays the data recorded during rowing.



Can be stored in an upright, space-saving position after an exercise session: the WaterRower.



The WaterRower is available in different types of wood and in stainless steel.

Then as now, the WaterRower offers the perfect combination of functional effectiveness and stylish design. It is characterized by the high quality of each of individual components and first-class workmanship. The precision rod coupling, the heart of the WaterRower, provides the typical feel if soft resistance when transferring the power from the pull cord to the water wheel. The polyester drawstrings are woven without stretching and do not wear out. All the individual parts are made of extremely solid materials and are therefore particularly robust. The easy-care transparent water tank, for example, is made of the same robust material that is used to make aircraft windows. The eight ball-bearing polyurethane castors of the seat run smoothly over the rails without making any noise whatsoever.

For all those who would like to complement the luxury fitness equipment with the addition of other devices right away – in addition to selling WaterRower rowing machines, the German company NOHRD in Nordhorn also manufactures fitness equipment with the utmost care and loving craftsmanship from fine solid-core woods, such as ash, cherry or walnut, as well as stainless steel.

- www.waterrower.com
- www.nohrd.com

Indoor rowing
... is considered one of the most holistic training methods for the entire body. Unlike many other sports, rowing as an exercise does not work individual muscles or muscle groups, but up to 85% of all muscles in the body. Of course, a training device like the WaterRower not only strengthens the muscles, but also improves fitness. Best of all, as a 'low impact' sport, rowing puts much less strain on the joints and thus significantly reduces the risk of injury.

WaterFlywheel technology provides an authentic rowing feeling and the pleasant swishing sound of moving water.
© Photos: WaterRower

Imprint

EK CONNECT – 40th Edition / 2021

Publisher

EDUARD KRONENBERG GmbH

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Images / Graphics / Illustration

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Print Version

DRUCKHAUS FISCHER

Frank Fischer GmbH

Schallbruch 71

42781 Haan / Rhld. – Germany

Printed on chlorine-free, environmentally friendly paper.

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WE ARE IN THIS TOGETHER

