



Press release

Date: 13th/14th November 2018

Roto in Austria since 1979 / 150 years of the Kalsdorf site / Modern production at historic site / Continuous investment / Extensive range / Development and competence centre also for the “Door” range / Greatest vertical range of manufacture in the Group’s global network / Training campaign to counteract shortage of skilled labour / Changeover in Styria

Contemporary technology for windows and doors

Kalsdorf / Graz / Leinfelden-Echterdingen – (rp) “It doesn’t take long for it to become apparent at the Kalsdorf site how efficiently tradition can be combined with progress.” In mid-November 2018, this is how Alois Lechner linked the long and eventful history of Roto’s Austrian site with its current significance for the globally active specialist in window and door technology. The Managing Director of Roto Frank Austria GmbH had a special reason for making this statement: specialist journalists from 16 different countries were present, with Lechner and his team providing them with a running commentary of ongoing operations at the production site in Styria.

There are “some really unusual conditions” at the company premises, which are steeped in history. For instance, the fact that a branch of the River Mur runs through the pocket of land, which covers 111,500 m² in total, is not exactly typical of a modern factory in the 21st century. The same applies to the building structure and layout, which have expanded over time, at the site that is celebrating its 150th anniversary in 2018.

All production stages over 28,700 m²

Lechner explained that Roto’s activities in Austria began in 1979 with the acquisition of 51% of the share capital of Lapp-Finze Eisenwarenfabriken AG by Wilhelm Frank GmbH, as it was known back then. Complete acquisition followed two years later. This heralded a



continuous phase of “major investment in modernisation and expansion” which extends to all production areas. The latest example of this is a new powder coating system costing almost €2.5 million.

Nowadays, Styria is not only home to the development and competence centre for the “Fentro” and “Door” ranges but is also the location of the production site with the greatest vertical range of manufacture in the construction supplier’s international network of factories. Premises approximately 28,700 m² in size currently house the company’s own facilities for tool manufacture, stamping, electroplating, powder coating, zinc die-cast, PVC injection moulding, pre-production and custom production for individual parts, assembly, warehouses for semi-finished products and finished goods and finally shipping, with most of these systems being automated. Thanks to this “end-to-end capacity” and efficient processes, it is possible to produce both small-scale and large-scale series depending on requirements.

As a result of the special local conditions, the site also has three of its own small hydroelectric power stations, which generate around 25% of the annual electricity required, amounting to approximately 12 million kWh. Roto considers itself to be in a good position, including where other matters relating to energy and the environment are concerned. Proof of this includes total conversion to energy-efficient LED lighting, modern wastewater and exhaust air systems and a boiler house for supplying heat. Roto’s active participation in a current pilot project for conserving water, chemicals and energy in the electroplating processes also highlights the company’s willingness to consider “new ideas and approaches”.

Committed to a reputation for high quality

Lechner simply described the product range manufactured in Kalsdorf as “extensive”. He specifically mentioned hardware for Tilt&Turn / Turn-Only / Tilt-Only windows, mechanical and electronic multipoint locking systems for entrance doors, main door hinges for various application



ranges, window shutter comfort hardware, electronic accessories for windows and doors, zinc and PVC components and punched parts. These are mainly supplied to other companies within the Roto Group. The company's customer base also includes customers from other industries.

The Managing Director also highlighted the fact that around 10% of the company's current 370 employees are trainees. This is testimony to the company's solemn pledge to take its own steps to counteract the shortage of skilled labour that has become pronounced in Austria. The provision of training in seven different skilled trades is also an expression of the range of technologies used at the site. The systematic commitment to trainees is the "logical consequence" of the company's own high quality standards and those of market partners.

Seamless transition

Head of Roto Dr Eckhard Keill used the 13th International Trade Press Day as an opportunity to express his appreciation for Alois Lechner, who will be retiring at the end of 2018 / start of 2019 after 45 years of working at the company. He started work in the factory in July 1973 as a young man aged 17 and gained initial experience in the Accounting department. As Keill went on to state, he continuously took on more tasks and greater responsibility until finally becoming Managing Director in 2006. Lechner rendered great service to the company as a "high achiever and pillar of strength for the Kalsdorf site". While showing his gratitude to Lechner, Keill passed on "best wishes" from the entire Roto Group for the future personal endeavours of the soon-to-be retiree.

At the same time, he introduced the new Managing Director of Roto Frank Austria GmbH, Christian Lazarevic (55). The current Head of Production started working for the company back in 2010 and is therefore "very familiar" with it. The many years of collaboration with Lechner will ensure that the changeover will go off without a hitch. Keill:

“With the carefully planned transition, we are clearly signifying continuity and stability in this position.”

Note to editor: a separate overview provides more detailed information about the Kalsdorf site.

Captions

Look at Roto Frank Austria: nowadays, Styria is not only home to the development and competence centre for the “Fentro” and “Door” ranges but is also the location of the site with the greatest vertical range of manufacture in the construction supplier’s international network of factories.

Photo: Roto

Roto_Austria.jpg

Seamless transition: Managing Director Alois Lechner (on the right) is leaving Roto Frank Austria GmbH at the end of 2018 / start of 2019 and going into retirement after 45 years of working at the company. His successor, Head of Production Christian Lazarevic, comes from the company’s own ranks.

Photo: Roto

Lazarevic_Lechner.jpg

A new powder coating system, which was commissioned in 2018, cost almost €2.5 million. Roto describes it as an example of the “continuous investment campaign” undertaken by the construction supplier since it began its operations in Austria around 40 years ago.

Photo: Roto

Pulverbeschichtung.jpg



According to Roto, its active participation in a pilot project for conserving water, chemicals and energy in the electroplating processes (photo) is recent proof of the company's willingness to help advanced environmental solutions become established. Long and small parts are galvanised on this production station.

Photo: Roto

Galvanik_Gestellanlage.jpg

The photo shows one of more than twenty PVC injection moulding machines in Roto's Austrian factory. The impressive production volume in this production area is around 250 million parts per year.

Photo: Roto

Kunststoffspritzguss.jpg

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