



150 Years under the Sign of the Frog

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The family-owned and operated Werner & Mertz of Mainz celebrated its 150th anniversary with the largest employee party ever in company history. From its founding as a wax goods factory to becoming the European market leader in ecological cleaning products, the global business looks back at an eventful history and points proudly to its loyalty to Mainz.



Werner & Mertz Managing Partner Reinhard Schneider and Moderator Stefan Schulze-Hausmann welcomed the 850 employees from all over Europe. Photo: Werner & Mertz / Alexander Sell

All employees celebrated together

On the occasion of the anniversary all employees from branches throughout Europe were invited to the big party in the company's home base in Germany. The Staatstheater Mainz offered a proper setting for the official ceremony and enough room – down to the last seat – for about 850 guests from Germany, Austria, France, Poland, Benelux, Italy and Spain. “We



want to build a bridge between our company's past and our ideas for the future," said Reinhard Schneider, managing partner of Werner & Mertz, as he welcomed the employees. Master of Ceremonies Stefan Schulze-Hausmann, TV moderator and founder of the German Sustainability Award Foundation, expertly led the audience through the program. "It's not enough to have a boss who is taken with the idea of sustainability," he said in his opening remarks. "You need employees who stand behind him with their own ideas." Schulze-Hausmann invited Rhineland-Palatinate Minister-President Malu Dreyer and Mainz Mayor Michael Ebling to join him onstage. Werner & Mertz recognized early, said Minister-President Dreyer, the sign of the times. The innovative company did not simply follow a trend, but committed to a cause. Employees took a 3-D dive into film clips that recounted the history of Werner & Mertz. They experienced it all, from the founding moments and the rebuilding after world wars to the emergence of a conscientiously sustainable company which takes up the challenges of the future and assumes responsibility for the environment. Their time travels were rounded off with orchestra music and dance performances.



Corporate history with a brilliant program: Werner & Mertz employees celebrated enthusiastically at the Mainz Staatstheater. Photo: Werner & Mertz / Alexander Sell



Congratulations from country and city: The Rhineland-Palatinate Minister-President Malu Dreyer and Mainz Mayor Michael Ebling with Reinhard Schneider, managing partner of Werner & Mertz (right). Photo: Werner & Mertz / Alexander Sell

True to the Mainz location for 150 years

The City of Mainz and Werner & Mertz belong together. From its founding in 1867 as a wax goods factory, first in Großen Bleiche, then in Erthal-Straße and as of 1908 in Ingelheimer Aue, the family business has remained true to its hometown. Werner & Mertz reaffirmed its loyalty to Mainz at the beginning of the year. That the story will continue in future is confirmed by the ultra-modern headquarters building, completed in 2010 and awarded Platinum certification by LEED. Very early on, Werner & Mertz added representation outside Germany with the opening of a second production site in Hallein, Austria, in 1953.

The red frog and the green frog



The company brought the Erdal brand with the red frog to the world's attention in 1901 with a shoe polish based on wax. The well-known red frog was joined by a green frog in 1986 with the launch of FROSCHE, the first ecological cleaning product brand in Germany. Since then, a firm commitment to sustainability has been part of the company's basic philosophy.

Pioneering achievements from shoe polish to ultra-modern recyclate bottles

Groundbreaking innovations and entrepreneurial spirit run through the entire history of Werner & Mertz. The modern mid-size business with a broad portfolio of detergents, cleaning and care products developed from small chandler operations. The famous ERDAL shoe polish was only the first of many novelties and innovations.

Today too the company is engaged in the development of sustainable products and packaging that lie ahead of other ecological benchmarks. The demanding standards have been recognized and rewarded. In Germany the FROSCHE brand is the leader in ecological cleaning products for the end consumer. The Recyclate Initiative, founded by Werner & Mertz in 2012, works together with partners from industry, retail trade and environmental organizations to promote effective plastic recycling in a circular economy. To date the Initiative has received several awards for its global innovations such as the development of bottles made of 100 percent recycled polyethylene, a high share of which is used plastic from the Yellow Bag collection system.

Award for outstanding engagement in Mittelstand

The festivities began when the company welcomed many representatives from business, politics and industrial associations to its headquarters and wrapped up days later at the employee party. The many well-wishers hailed not only from the immediate "neighborhood" in Mainz, but also from all parts of the country. Special recognition came from the federal association of mid-sized businesses. Mario Ohoven, president of the Bundesverbands für Mittelständische Wirtschaft (BVMW) presented Reinhard Schneider with a certificate which conferred the title "Senator h.c." in the BVMW "for his untiring engagement on behalf of the German Mittelstand".

www.werner-mertz.de

www.we-for-recyclate.de

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