



STAPPERT



INOX INSIDER
THE MAGAZINE FOR
CUSTOMERS AND PARTNERS.

- 04 **The Lord of the Saws.**
- 06 **STAPPERT in the Netherlands.**
- 10 **Portrait of WALDNER.**



Dear readers,

I am very happy to present the new edition of the Inox Insider today. It is the first edition I announce in my position as General Manager of STAPPERT Deutschland GmbH.

We have faced some great challenges over the course of this year. But the STAPPERT team worked together to overcome these hurdles and that is why we are pleased to tell you that our company is in a very strong position at the end of the year.

There were a few particularly interesting developments this year that we are very excited to share with you in this edition of our magazine. The success of STAPPERT is built on a long tradition and expertise in the stainless steel business and I would like to continue systematically following this formula – while keeping a close eye on market conditions.

We have modernised our warehouse location in Bönen so that we are in a position to expand our service offer. Our sawing centre has been extended to include a fully automated sawing system, which means that we can increase the level of service for our customers. Reinforcing our level of service, incorporating new grades and dimensions into the product portfolio and supplying tailor-made products to new industry sectors are all concrete targets that will continue to be of central importance for STAPPERT as we head into the future.

The internationalisation of STAPPERT is being expressed through investments in existing overseas locations of the STAPPERT group. There have also been several acquisitions in countries where STAPPERT is not yet represented. There is also active support for the international orientation from our Export department, located in Ahrensburg. While opportunities for expansion within Germany are limited, there are interesting potential markets in other European countries and even further afield. We must remember that our customers have a strong international presence and expect us to be able to serve them from several location across Europe – and even worldwide.

But you can see for yourselves! I hope you enjoy reading and I look forward to exciting exchanges in all our future meetings.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Marc Steffen', written in a cursive style.

Marc Steffen



STAPPERT

INOX INTELLIGENCE.

CONTENTS

Brand News

- The Lord of the Saws.** 04
The new automatic sawing system in Bönen.

International Affairs

- Experience leads to success.** 06
STAPPERT Nederland on the road to success.
- Export on tour.** 08
Trade fairs in Asia.
- Parla italiano?** 09
The Italian export market.

Customer Portrait

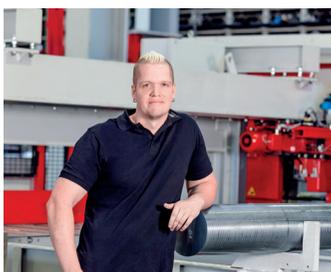
- From milking pail to global company.** 10
Portrait of Herrmann Waldner GmbH & Co. KG.

Products

- Cold-formed flat steel range expanded.** 12
Replenishment of material 1.4305.
- 1.4550 - the grade for specialised use.** 12
New grade available from the warehouse.
- System solutions for water technology.** 13
It is impossible to think of water technology without stainless steel.

Flashlights

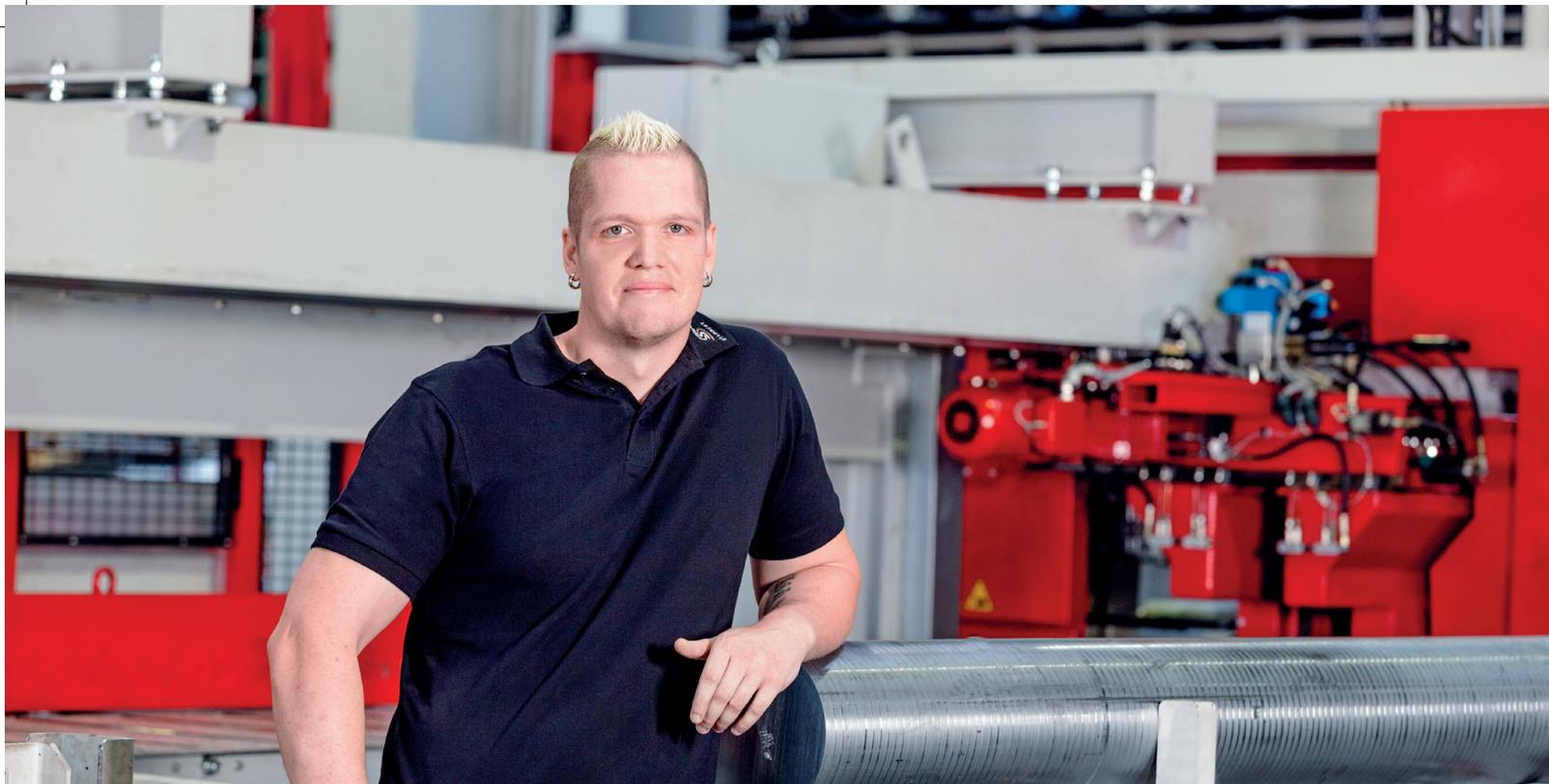
- Surrounded by men.** 14
Christin Lang is the first female expert in warehouse logistics.
- Steel in the blood.** 15
Christer Nilsson is the new manager of STAPPERT Sverige.



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Tim Heistermann has worked his way up the ladder from apprentice to deputy warehouse manager and is now in charge of 15 saws.

BRAND NEWS

The Lord of the Saws.

Tim Heistermann is deputy warehouse manager of the STAPPERT Deutschland GmbH warehouse in Bönen. There is hardly anyone there who knows the different saws as well as he does.

The 'Ferrari' stands right at the entrance to the warehouse hall. This is the nickname that the employees of the logistics centre at STAPPERT Deutschland GmbH in Bönen have given the brand new automatic sawing system. "We called it Ferrari simply because it is the best machine in the sawing facility," says Tim Heistermann. He is standing in front of the huge piece of apparatus. Black trousers, black t-shirt. Safety boots on his feet and a helmet on his head. Tim Heistermann has been working with machines that are capable of cutting stainless steel blocks that measure 650 x 800 millimetres ever since he started his training to become an expert in warehouse logistics at STAPPERT on 1 September 2000. "I started my training at the old warehouse in Westhofen," the 33 year-old family man explains. In those days, the staff only had five different saws to choose from. There are now 15 in Bönen. This also includes the state-of-the-art automatic sawing system.

Automated sawing processes.

Heistermann and his team can place up to seven long products with a diameter of 100 to 250 millimetres on the machine at its current setting. When programmed accordingly, the saw can process several different jobs autonomously, one after the other. This means that the showpiece machine, which was developed together with the Behringer saw manufacturer specifically for the requirements of the STAPPERT warehouse

in Bönen, can operate fully independently for several hours. "This is a huge help to our daily operations," says Heistermann. Since the most important thing is: The saws must be kept running. And they practically do that around the clock. However, it is true that the machines have to be stopped for a little while when a saw blade needs changing or a rare breakdown occurs. The expert explains "You notice straight away if a blade is not running properly." The sawing process, which is generally incredibly quiet, becomes loud all of a sudden, the machine starts vibrating and the cross sectional cutting view is no longer straight. The cutting surface becomes wavy and grooves start to form. "We set very high standards for our cuts", says Heistermann. "We do not tolerate even a slight deviation from the straight cross sectional cutting view."

Enthusiastic expert.

Tim Heistermann has gained the required expert knowledge by working on different saws over the past 16 years. He can talk about saws, saw blades and cross sectional cuts for hours. Since he assumed the role of deputy warehouse manager last year, he hardly spends any time on the saws himself. He has also taken a step back from shift work around the clock. Now it is his job to ensure that the saws always have enough work to do. But sometimes he jumps in to support from time to time. "It always feels good to get involved again," he says.

Service for the clients.

Most of the bars are between three and six metres long when they arrive in the warehouse. The men on the saws then cut them down to the size required by the customers. "There is a very high demand for sawn pieces. So it is a good job that we have optimised our processes," says Heistermann. This means that the whole process, from receiving an incoming order through to commissioning and then sending out the finished sawn pieces, usually takes less than two days. That is simply incredible. Since the saws have to work hard in order to cut the thick steel pieces in two parts. "The thickness of the bar is one factor that affects the length of the sawing process," explains Heistermann. Another is the grade we are working on. Since there are some varieties of steel that are harder than others. Superduplex steels, in particular, pose a real challenge for even the strongest saws. And not only the saws, but also the saw blades.



It comes down to the details.

"The tooth pitch of the saw blade is also critical to the success of the sawing process," says Heistermann. There are many different versions to choose from. In order to demonstrate the difference, he reaches into a barrel containing the various saw blades. These are completely different to how you would expect a saw blade to look. Rather than thick discs, these are more like long strips, which are stretched out on two large wheels in the saw machines. These blades with their countless shark's teeth reach up to 8.8 metres long. "All in all, we saw over 40 different grades with a range of different diameters," says Heistermann. These include U-channels, angles, round and square bars. Each of the 15 saws is calibrated to deal with a different diameter. "This means that we have different blades in different saws in order to achieve the best quality saw cut and high utilisation level of the saw machines. We work like this so that we can meet customer requirements at all times," says Heistermann.

Bönen innovation workshop.

Since STAPPERT has a lot of experience in sawing stainless steel, it is not unusual for saw blade manufacturers to stop by and use the Bönen location as a testing site to see how well their new developments work in practice. "Even if they are in love with their product at first. So far, we have managed to cut everything in two," laughs Heistermann. Then he has said enough. About the saws, blades and materials. He has to get back to work, where he can keep an eye on the entire sawing centre and feel a little bit like the 'Lord of the Saws'.

Quick and customised.

The Bönen location gained a new attraction at the start of 2016. The 17.27 metre long new automatic sawing system, which was specifically developed in conjunction with the saw manufacturer Behringer to meet demands in the STAPPERT warehouse, is delighting employees and customers in equal measure. Specific customer requirements can now be fulfilled in a quick and flexible manner. Using the appropriate programming, the supersaw can also process several orders after one another – completely autonomously.

Other special features:

- Cutting lengths are buffered up to 3,000 millimetres and thin pieces are pushed into draws in line with the job specifications.
- Offcuts are deposited in the returns bin separately.
- Regulation cuts are moved to the relevant deposit points.
- A marking device makes it possible to apply die stamping in line with customer requirements.

In fact, the new automatic saw only signals the beginning of the planned expansions in Bönen. Further probing has already been performed this year. The planned extension work in Bönen will also see the introduction of a second fully automatic saw system.

Experience leads to success.

Following a storming start to the year, the sky is the limit at STAPPERT Nederland. The experience of General Manager Koos Sassen has brought great success to the branch in terms of sales, and not for the first time since relocating to the Zwijndrecht facility.



The STAPPERT Nederland team with Koos Sassen (left)

The 'Von der Linde Stahl' company, which was founded as a subsidiary of Leonard Bors in 1976, is one of the leading dealers of stainless steel products in the Netherlands, and has been part of the STAPPERT Group since 1978. Following 37 years at the Dordrecht location, STAPPERT Nederland BV found a new home in Zwijndrecht in 2015.

Koos Sassen has been part of STAPPERT in the Netherlands since the start in 1978, was made General Manager in 1983, and has made a significant contribution to the rise of the company. The music lover and guitar fan has seen a lot over more than 40 years of professional service and is happy to share stories of his extensive, often very amusing, experiences with anyone who will listen.

Whether telephone calls from Egyptian customers in the middle of the night or offices that have caught on fire - Koos Sassen has seen it all.

His long experience is undoubtedly one of the reasons why the company was able to come through the difficult period after outsourcing the ABRA product line in 2011. The wear-resistant steel from ABRA, which was a very high demand commodity in the Dordrecht region, was one of the main sources of income for STAPPERT Nederland. When asked, Sassen tells us: "Politically and commercially speaking, the ABRA affair was worse for our business. From this point on, we were only able to balance our losses through the sale of stainless steel.



This office building is the home of STAPPERT Nederland, centrally located close to the station and motorway access

Now the team from the Netherlands is predominantly focused on selling stainless steel bars. Since all products are sourced directly from the warehouse location in Bönen, STAPPERT Nederland enjoys an advantage over the domestic competition, which generally does not have such a broad portfolio to draw on. This means that the Dutch employees always have access to special grades, products and dimensions from the tube, pipe and fittings range.

Part of a strong group.

On an annual basis, Koos Sassen's team sells several thousand tonnes of stainless steel to around 600 clients, predominantly from the fields of engineering and special engineering industry as well as the turning industry. This covers the whole gambit, from major clients, who source some two thirds of the products through to smaller essential users. As a result, the STAPPERT subsidiary is constantly growing at a rate of 10% to 15% every year. According to Sassen, this is mainly thanks to the support provided by the parent company. "Since we joined STAPPERT, we have tabled incredible growth – since we are able to offer both standard products and special products in line with the market.

A close-knit team.

And STAPPERT Nederland managed to achieve all of this with just nine people! With such a compact team, it is important that everyone is on the same wavelength. A laid-back atmosphere and the fact that everyone is on first-name terms certainly helps. Tasks are clearly assigned – and there is one

person in particular that Koos Sassen cannot and will not do without. "Renate is my left and right hand and in fact, she is also my left and right eye," In 2013, STAPPERT Nederland also strengthened its team with another active outside salesman, 'the Warner', which, according to Sassen, is working exceptionally well: "I am big fan of the field service." However, Sassen is also desperately searching for a second colleague who can tap into the Northern market, thus meeting the ambitious goal of covering the whole of the Netherlands. Demand is high. That is why Koos Sassen and his team are very optimistic about the future.



Guitar fan Koos Sassen has decorated his office in colourful fashion

Export on Tour.

September – Tube China.

Tube China is an international trade fair for the tube and pipe industry that took place from 26 to 29 September in Shanghai. It is one of the world's largest trade fairs for tube and pipe technology and is only open to specialist visitors. These come from a wide range of branches such as the iron, steel, metal, automotive supplier, electronic, construction, oil, natural gas and chemical industry as well as energy and power supply. STAPPERT is a constant in the exhibitor directory, and the company has been present at the trade fair every other year since 2004. And even though they are not that far apart, the export staff from STAPPERT are always surprised with the rapid development of the city between each event. In the first few years there were hardly any English-speaking visitors to the trade fair, now it is not unusual for the taxi driver to be making his way to the exhibition ground. And if you were amazed to see a new, gigantic skyscraper two years ago, this has now been overtaken by the next construction project, just two years later. But Shanghai is not just an expression of a rapidly developing economy, but also a place that brings Asian countries closer together. Just a few years ago, who would have thought it possible that a trade fair in China could attract visitors from Taiwan or Thailand. Shanghai is the perfect platform for Martina Stöver and her team to boost business in Asia. That is why the next Tube China has already been marked on the calendar for 2018.

November/December – OSEA Singapore.

OSEA 2016 took place in Singapore from 29 November to 2 December for the 21st time. This combination of trade fair and conference was first held 40 years ago to cater to experts from the oil and gas industry. 1000 exhibitors from 48 countries were on show at the trade fair. STAPPERT was also be on hand with its own booth. It was the company's premiere appearance at the event and for Martina Stöver, Manager of the Export department, the trip to Singapore took her back to her roots. This vibrant metropolis was the destination for her first trip to Asia with STAPPERT back in 1998. The oil and gas industry is currently going through a very difficult phase. In spite of this, or maybe because of it, STAPPERT wanted to show their presence here and join in heralding the start of a transformation. Almost 16,000 visitors were at the event, so Martina Stöver and her team were very excited about all the interesting discussions.

Stainless steel is in demand all over the world. It goes without saying that STAPPERT is also represented in distant places with the INOX INTELLIGENCE. You can read about some selected events here.



Customers from Taiwan and Thailand visit the STAPPERT booth.



The glittering metropolis of Singapore played host to OSEA this winter.

Parla italiano?

Martina Stöver has had to answer this question with increasing regularity over the past few weeks. She has been on the road in Italy since mid-September, hoping to tap into the Italian market for the STAPPERT product range.



Italy is one of Europe's largest markets for stainless steel products. A good reason for proven stainless steel experts STAPPERT to play an active role in the country. Commanding an extensive range of products, directly from the warehouse, including many special grades, STAPPERT is leaps ahead of most competitors on the Italian market. But in fact, the company is complete newcomer here and is hardly known at all. So it is not an easy task that awaits Export Manager Martina Stöver.

Starting point: Northern Italy.

The rich and highly industrialised north of the country is the best starting point for STAPPERT to gain Italian customers. That is why, at the end of September and start of October, Martina Stöver went on the road in order to hold meetings and make contacts in Milan, Vincenza, Venice and Parma. Once again, she benefited from her international network. It has been possible to open doors and gather contact partners using the business contacts that she has built up in over the past 19 years working for STAPPERT. It soon became clear that: Italy will be a difficult nut to crack, since they like to stick with their own kind. Anyone who wants to do business with Italians must tread carefully in attempting to win their confidence. This requires patience and a regular presence in the area. Mrs Stöver wants to take care of the presence and she is still working on the patience – which is not one of her strengths. According to her estimates, it will take two to three years until STAPPERT is firmly established on this market. The company intends to bridge the distance to the new customers in Italy using a 'Free House' supply service. Language barriers also need to be overcome. Only very few Italians speak English, which means that the export team, including Martina Stöver, will have to improve their knowledge of Italian.



The customer manufactured these components (top left) from one of the first deliveries to Italy.

First successes.

But there has already been some partial success on the way to the goal. Martina Stöver has gained six new customers in Italy and generated the first smaller orders. She also held a number of meetings in a very positive atmosphere and in doing so, laid the foundations for future business. This brought her into contact with the Italian mentality, which she describes as extremely warm and hospitable. It was not unusual for the business meetings to start off with a group lunch and meet-and-greet before the conversation turned to stainless steel. The people she met outside of the business world also greeted her with great respect and relaxed friendliness. The pleasant, early-autumn temperatures and the incomparably good espresso also contributed to her feeling of well-being.

Which makes it even nicer to think that this was just the start of the STAPPERT activities in Italy. Participation in the 'Made in Steel' event from 17 to 19 May 2017 in Milan has already been arranged. This will provide the opportunity for the company to excite the Italian expert market with its extensive INOX INTELLIGENCE and significantly increase awareness of the brand.

CUSTOMER PORTRAIT

From milking pail to global company.

Founded in the year 1908 as a plumbing business, the Waldner corporate group has expanded to become one of the world's leading manufacturers of laboratory equipment, process plants and packaging machines for the food, pharmaceutical and chemical industry. The company, whose headquarters are in Wangen in the Allgäu, currently employs around 1,400 staff and has subsidiaries all over the world. CEO Karl Angele gave us an interview to talk about the highlights and challenges faced by the company.

You are the managing director and sales manager of Hermann Waldner GmbH, which is part of Waldner Holding, responsible for the Dosomat, Process Systems and Water Technology departments. Could you give a quick explanation of the tasks covered in these fields.

These are three completely distinct departments. On the one hand, we construct machines for filling and sealing food containers. That is the Dosomat division. The first Dosomat was invented 70 years ago, following which the name was patented in several countries. So our name is now protected. The Dosomats that we build are purchased by customers who want to fill and seal containers. This means that whenever you buy a yoghurt or jam, the tubs or jars have been filled with products from the jam or yoghurt manufacturer. The process of filling and sealing these prefabricated vessels takes place in the manufacturers' facilities using our machines. Once all of the containers have been filled, they are packed into cardboard boxes. We also build the machines that perform this task. So we design – everything from the individual piece through to complete systems – which makes it possible to deliver entire lines to the customers.

The Process Systems division was previously known as Tank and Container Construction. Initially, the main client base for the container construction company was the milk industry and the affiliated sectors. Since the start of the seventies, we have also been producing pressure tanks and machines for the chemistry, pharmaceutical and food industry. The construction of cooking equipment became more and more important for the food industry during the 1980s. Cooking equipment from Waldner was used for producing the fruit portions of yoghurts or jams. In the nineties, the company also started building isolators, drying cabinets and containments for new markets.

And then you have the Water Technology department. We buy and sell items such as valves, drain gutters, taps and spigots. Rinsing processes and sewage handling is necessary on a large scale in the food and drinks industry, in chemistry and pharmacy,



hospitals and large kitchens. In these environments, water technology from Waldner helps to dispose of liquids in a hygienic and economic manner.

Mr Angele, what would you say makes the Hermann Waldner company stand out?

Hermann Waldner GmbH & Co. KG is established as an independent company under Waldner Holding GmbH & Co. KG. We are 107 years old and are employee owned, stable, serious and loyal. We table continuous growth and invest an unbelievable amount in modernising the company. We always keep a close eye on customer requests. As far as I am concerned, they are like royalty. If the customer says: 'I want a machine that does this', that is how I build it. Using my building blocks, which are adapted to suit the customer needs. Then we consider whether the customer needs a carousel, or an inline machine with one or more tracks. In 1970, we were already in a position to fill 20,000 containers on 10 tracks using the Dosomat 20. But there are also customers, who have completely new ideas for specialised products.

Who started your company's success story?

Hermann Waldner invented the aluminium oval milking pail, which was a real innovation, since it was easy to place between the feet during the milking process, and could be held using the legs. The company was initially focused on producing items for the milk industry, which were helpful when it came to processing milk: milk sieves, milk tanks, cheese curd tubs. Later on, production also turned to cheese processing plants and the first 'laboratory benches' for the milk industry research and teaching facility in Wangen. In fact, everything in the Allgäu started with the milk industry. That is why we have advertised 30 years ago with the motto: "Waldner – in the beginning, everything was cheese!"

How did you personally end up at Hermann Waldner GmbH?

Purely by chance. Waldner was looking for somebody, I got in touch and just like that, I joined the team. I started in the construction of filling and sealing machines in 1973 and I was technical manager in 1975/1976. And with 33 years, I was yet head of this department, the procurer. Anton Waldner always had faith in me, he was a great guy. We worked side by side up until his death in 1998. Back then I was the youngest, now I am the oldest. But I am just as motivated now I was on my first day.

You have a TÜV-certified environmental management system. Is this certificate important to your customers?

To be honest I have never had to show that certificate in my life. Our customers know that they are dealing with the best suppliers. STAPPERT, for example, always provides the stainless steel for our machines at top quality and at great prices. Our activities are oriented towards globally accepted standards. As a way of ensuring that we meet all international requirements, we also have an examination and certification performed by an independent body on an annual basis.

What do you expect from a supplier like STAPPERT?

I believe that a supplier is also a partner. Loyalty and truthfulness are very important qualities, as are preferred, proper delivery and the best prices.

What makes your machines different to those produced by the competition?

There is a huge difference. Hermann Waldner GmbH & Co. KG has a very good reputation. We offer top quality and the price is right. Maintenance and service play a very important role for us. We can react very quickly because we have almost everything in stock. However, some customers rate durability above price. For example, if they purchase a machine for one million Euros, they will still probably have to spend around 100,000 Euros on maintenance costs in the upcoming years. So they are effectively paying 1.1 million Euros. If they purchase another machine for 900,000 Euros, but then have maintenance costs of 400,000 Euros over the next few years, then



they have ultimately spent 1.3 million Euros. Many customers do not see it like this, since they believe: "I am alive right now, but who knows where I will be in five years time?" So they buy what they consider to be the cheaper machine based on their short-term perspective.

What has been your most interesting order so far?

The most interesting and largest order came from Kraft. The order was for Tassimo coffee capsules. And it was for millions of units. Why built 15 systems, each with 48 tracks. My colleagues came through this order with flying colours. This experience that we gained from this order helped us to fulfil other customer requests. We had one order for tobacco that is smoked in waterpipes, for example. I was asked if I could imagine separating shisha tobacco into portions and filling it in small containers like those for the coffee that George Clooney advertises – ready-to-use tobacco capsules or pads. No easy task, but we constructed a Dosomat that inserted the sticky tobacco into ready-to-use capsules. These are now sold in Beirut. The whole team has to take credit for the performance, even if it is me who makes contact with the clients. Networking is an important part of our business. And personal connections are particularly important on a secondary level; among the fitters, for example.

Mr Angele, do you have any free time?

Yes of course. I am married with two children, and have two grandchildren who are nine and ten years old. My job means that I spend lots of time travelling all around the world. Even at the weekend. But my family life and the time together with them is very important.

Mr Angele, thank you very much for this fascinating interview.

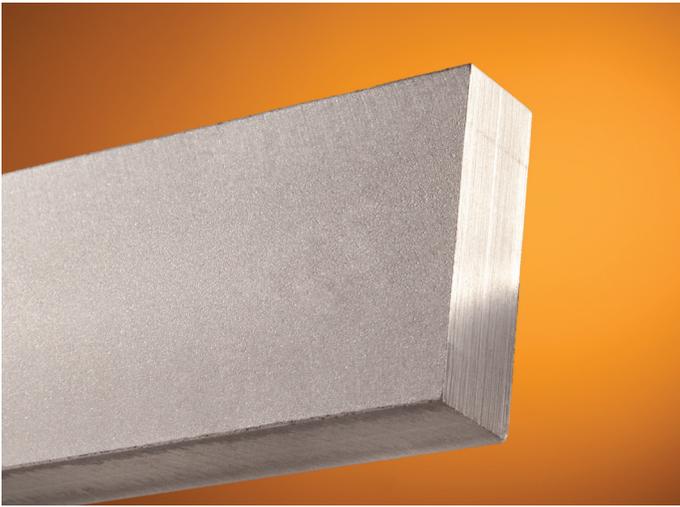


The Dosomat in action

PRODUCTS

Cold-formed flat steel range expanded.

The high demand for flat steel made from grade 1.4305 has led to another significant replenishment to the STAPPERT stock range.



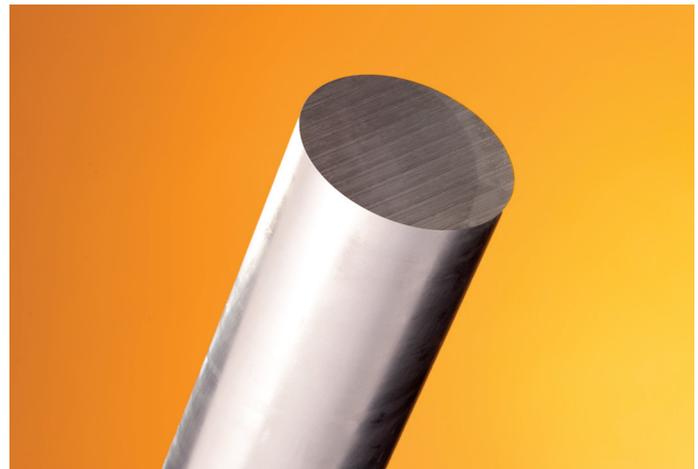
As already mentioned in the previous edition, cold-formed flat steel is one of the most important products for the processing industry. The grade 1.4305 is used in several applications in the engineering industry, the automobile sector and the food industry. STAPPERT is a front-runner in variety of grades and dimensions. In order to maintain this position, they have made the following flat steel dimensions using grade 1.4305 available directly from the warehouse:

- 25-6, 25-12, 25-15 and 25-20.
- 50-6, 50-12 and 50-25.
- 60-6 and 60-25.
- 70-10, 70-15, 70-20, 70-30 and 70-40.
- 80-25.
- 100-8, 100-25 and 100-40.
- 120-10, 120-12, 120-15 and 120-20.

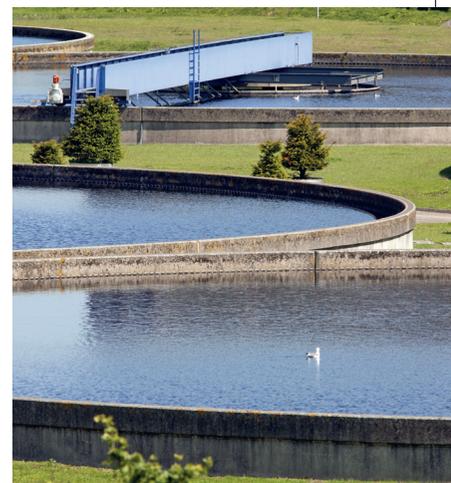
1.4550 – the grade for specialised use.

The thing that sets STAPPERT apart is the wide range of steel specialities that are available from stock. For example, the round bars made from grade 1.4550, which has recently been added to the product range.

This special long product is certified multiple times (1.4550/AISI 347/347H and UNS S34700/S34709) and is suitable for use in apparatus and plant construction, power plant construction, pressure vessel construction and mechanical engineering and the chemical and energy production. The 1.4550 is a slightly magnetisable austenitic chrome-nickel steel, which is used at temperatures between 270°C and approx. 900°C (in air). Round bars in 1.4550 can essentially be delivered with a 3.1 certificate and are available from the warehouse in random lengths from 4.0 to 6.2 metres and diameters of 20 to 150 mm.



System solutions for water technology.



It is impossible to think of water technology without stainless steel. Continuously ensuring maximum water quality requires the use of suitable, durable grades with outstanding characteristics.

Stainless steel can be used for a wide range of water technology applications thanks to their high resistance to corrosion. They are used, for example, in the fourth treatment stage in the biological cleaning of industrial and communal drainage systems. One of the main requirements to maintain the long life cycle for corrosion pipes and tubes is to choose the right grade.

That is why water technology is a critical field, in which Germany plays a key role. This poses a challenge for STAPPERT. The specialist for stainless, highly corrosion and heat resistant steels considers this to be a very interesting business area and has expanded its product range especially for these applications in the field of seamless pipes and tubes and also welded pipes and tubes (1.4301; 1.4541; 1.4404; 1.4571). The grades

mentioned here have been tried and tested in water technology. STAPPERT also stocks flanges with reduced and full thickness of a nominal pressure from 10 to 600. The required butt weld fittings such as elbows, reducers and Tees are kept in stock to match the tube and pipe programme. Square and round pipes and tubes in 1.4404 and 1.4571 are also used for high performance engineering plants and it would be hard to imagine systems without them. Special grades are also available from the STAPPERT warehouse.

Invoicing via email.

In order to ensure quick, simple handling and easier archiving of invoices, customers receive these from STAPPERT in digital form. This can happen in one of two ways. Either as a digitally signed PDF document via email or following a one-off, free registration with D-TRUST - with a qualified electronic signature as a PDF document, also via email. By taking this approach, STAPPERT is doing its bit towards achieving a paperless office and increasing sustainability.



Clear, modern and more informative.

STAPPERT presents itself in a new, user-friendly look.

You can find the homepage of the STAPPERT group under the usual address, where they are positively glowing following a technical, visual and above all, contentual rework. As well as a modern, responsive design, the main focus of the remodelling was to update the information to suit the needs of the target audience. As usual, interested parties will be kept up to date on a regular basis with the latest news, products and events on the new website. So customers, employees and partners will be able to get an even more detailed insight into the core competencies and service spectrum offered by the STAPPERT group. See for yourself from January 2017: www.stappert.biz/deutschland!



Christin Lang



Part of the warehouse team in Bönen

FLASHLIGHTS

Surrounded by men.

Christin Lang is the first apprentice hoping to become a warehouse logistics expert at STAPPERT. She has been working at the warehouse in Bönen since August. Her boss and colleagues are delighted.

Christin Lang looks attentively at the computer screen. Then once again at the paper copy. 186 bars of eight millimetre round steel need to be commissioned. That is what it says on the order. The diminutive young woman takes the cassette with the relevant stainless steel products from the high-rack warehouse and checks the batch number. "That's it", she says quickly, nodding to her colleague Matthias Dziuban. She then takes the control panel for the crane and moves the two heavy hooks suspended on chains into position. Let's get started.

Self-reliant, confident, well practised – sometimes it seems as though Christin Lang is an old hand. But the 22 year-old only started her training to become an expert in warehouse logistics a few weeks ago. This makes her the first woman that STAPPERT has decided to train in this position – and they are impressed. "Christin is really good at what she does. She shows a lot of interest and is a reliable worker", says her colleague. Her superiors are also very happy. "Mrs Lang has completely fulfilled our expectations so far, she runs rings around some of our male apprentices", explains her boss, Christian Rosenberg.

An unusual job.

Of course, Christin isn't the only woman in the company. There are currently around 70 apprentices working at STAPPERT Deutschland, and many of them are women. However, most of them are training to become wholesale and export specialists or experts in office management. "But I wanted to do some-

thing hands-on. I really enjoy doing this job. There is always something different," explains Lang. But of all places, in a stainless steel warehouse, where several thousand tonnes of this versatile material get moved every day? "I never expected to be dragging around stainless steel products that weigh 100 kilogrammes" says Lang. That is also why they have a crane. She gets on extremely well with her male colleagues: "Every-one here is a gentleman," she says, laughing. She grew up with her father, who ran a mobile stage hire company, where she got involved at a young age.

The most important reason.

Lang admits that working in the warehouse for eight hours every day is quite tiring. Especially when she knows that there is another challenge waiting for her when she gets home, even if it is a nice one: her two-year old daughter Amy. She is the reason why the young mother cycles more than half an hour from Hamm to Bönen every morning. "I want to build a solid, secure future for Amy. That is the most important thing for me." There is no such thing as a typical day for Lang. She goes wherever she is needed. That could mean helping out with warehousing, commissioning orders like today, or taking on office tasks. She hasn't had chance to work on the saws yet. But that is still to come. And the guys in Bönen are convinced that she will also rise to this challenge. It's true that she is the only woman training to be an expert in warehouse logistics. But she won't be alone for much longer.

FLASHLIGHTS

Steel in the blood.

STAPPERT Sverige has found a manager, whose passion for steel runs in his blood. The goals for the next few years are stacked high – but Christer Nilsson is approaching the challenge with typical Swedish cool.



Christer Nilsson and his colleagues on the machines

In 2004, STAPPERT made the Swedish firm Specialstål AB a subsidiary company and thus incorporated the town of Älmhult into its locations. STAPPERT Sverige AB gained a new manager in June 2016. Christer Nilsson, 58 years old and a stalwart of the steel industry, has taken the helm and is very happy to be promoting INOX INTELLIGENCE on the Swedish market. Nilsson is still in the process of finding out his tasks, which appliances are at his disposal and how they ensure customer loyalty at STAPPERT – "There just aren't enough hours in the day," he jokes.

Steel, steel and more steel.

The selling and marketing of steel products have run like a thread through Nilsson's career. Before joining STAPPERT, he spent seven years as the regional manager of Stena Stal AB, a member of the Stena Metall Group. Prior to this, he worked as the sales manager for steel manufacturers Ovako Steel for six years. A "full-range supplier of stainless steel, whose brand has the power to overcome the market competition" – Nilsson's first impression of STAPPERT – fits this tradition perfectly.

Ambitious goal.

And Nilsson, wants to build on these strengths further in future, in order to increase awareness of STAPPERT on the Swedish market and gain a greater market share – he wants "to be seen".

Nilsson's long-term goals are a healthy, sustainable business with controlled costs. He is confident that, ten years from now, STAPPERT will be the number-one supplier of long stainless steel products in Sweden.

Drawing strength from the Swedish nature.

He is optimistic about the future – a characteristic that Swedish people are known for. With regard to the question, why people from his country are so happy, Nilsson has a clear answer: "The close proximity to forest and field, the breadth of the beautiful Swedish landscape – there are virtually no fences – the people really feel free." The expansive Swedish nature is also one of the reasons why, despite the responsibility attached to his job, Nilsson is able to just switch off from time to time. He unwinds by working in his summerhouse, tinkering with cars or enjoying a round of golf.

And it seems and though the laidback Swedish attitude could be a model for success – at least in Nilsson's family. His grown-up daughters (31 and 33 years old) have both followed in his footsteps. The eldest works for a market leading stainless steel producer and STAPPERT supplier, while the younger daughter is the strategic purchaser at a paper machine manufacturer, where she is responsible for steel procurement. It seems as though Sweden has no need to worry about the future of the steel business.



In his free time, Nilsson enjoys the Swedish countryside from behind the wheel of his sports car

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