

Magazine for Customers and Friends of Brabender Technologie GmbH & Co. KG

FLUX

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Identifying and solving refill problems

/10 Putting on a show at Lake Constance
Brabender Technologie at FAKUMA 2018

/16 Family Celebration
Customer Event 60+1

/22 There's always room for improvement
Creating trust with the ISO 9001



REFILL

FLUX

> editorial



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Dear business partners, dear colleagues,

There is a time for everything. Given the various topics in this issue, the factor of time in its many aspects is a common thread. Take our lead article for instance – it describes how we deal with the often underestimated process of feeder refilling. You might think it can be managed easily. Many believe a fast process is imperative. Yet time applies here too: it all requires the right tempo to ensure feeding remains accurate.

There is also a time to celebrate. Strictly speaking, our anniversary and office relocation took place in 2017 however we waited another year in order to put on a great event with a blend of conviviality and information for our guests.

And finally, Horst Vohwinkel looks back at an entire era. The co-creator of the FlexWall® is retiring and addresses a few words to all those who have accompanied him on his long journey. We would like to thank him. Without him, Brabender Technologie would not be the company it is today.

We wish you an enjoyable read!
Kind regards

Bruno Dautzenberg, Horst Vohwinkel and
Günter Kuhlmann

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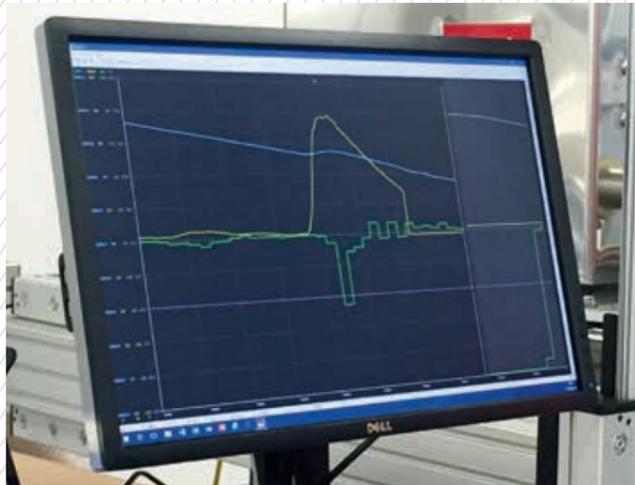
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RELIABLE FEEDING requires proper refilling

Experiencing any unexplained process or torque anomalies? It may be necessary to check and see whether your feeder refill is having an effect on your loss in weight feeder. >



Img. 1: Changes in speed and product flow can be easily monitored on the screen.



Img. 3: Normal product flow



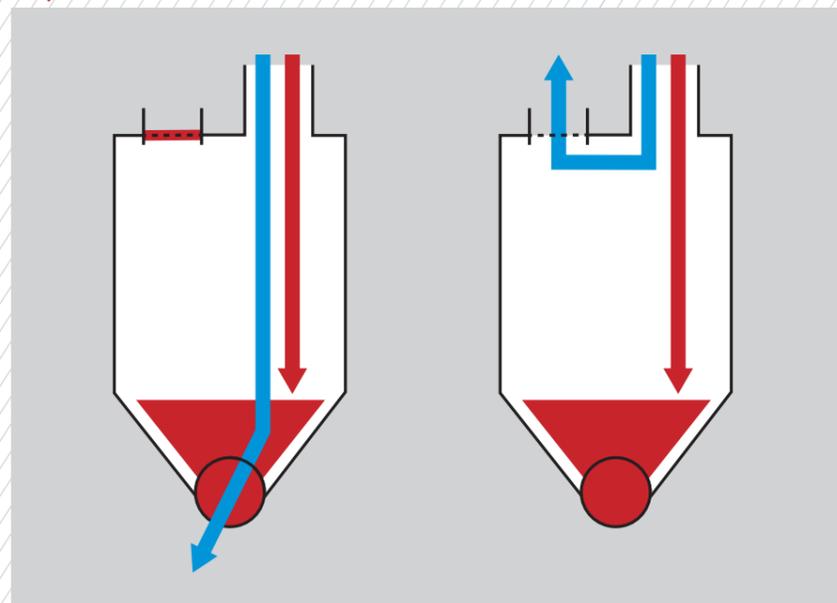
Img. 4: Vented air pushes ingredient out in the event of a blocked filter

In Brabender Technologie's new Technical Center, filling and refilling processes can be accurately tested using the second refill level. "Many users underestimate how critical these processes are for weighing, especially during continuous production", Ralf Eikermann, Head of Customer Care, relates. That is why installation and maintenance of all the equipment should be made by a single organization.

Structure influences

"We are familiar with this issue from our service visits", Ralf Eikermann tells us of his team's experiences. "Customers often purchase feeders that can be incorporated with their existing refilling systems. For large high-rate feeding equipment, a robust steel structure is integrated with the feeder system to support the weight of the equipment and

Img. 2: Airflows when the filter is open (right) and blocked (left).



bulk material. For example, when a large bag is emptied into the refill hopper, it generates a substantial dynamic force that can temporarily affect weighing." This impacts feeding accuracy, "although steel is strong, it is also flexible. We can't see it with the naked eye, but if the refill device comes into contact with the weighing unit, the resulting force confuses the scales. They feed in higher quantities, as they are measuring a gain in weight." The screw's rotational speed then increases (Img. 1). "Consequently, customers call to tell us that their feed rate is inaccurate. However, the fault lies in the structural design because the feeder scales weigh more than just the bulk material."

The venting problem

At a major customer event on September 20, 2018 in Duisburg (report on page 16) engineers at Brabender Technologie set up three demonstrations of typical refilling problems. Insufficient equipment support was one of them. Another demonstrated a typical problem that occurs when powder is fed. The problem was obvious – a feeder normally feeds powder very uniformly, however, during refill the bulk material discharged uncontrolled at a high pressure out of the screw tube. What happened? The dust sock had blinded and

therefore the screw tube was the pressure release point. When the feeder's hopper is filled, the displaced air needs to escape. That would normally happen via a dust sock. If this is clogged, then the screw tube is the only remaining option for the air to escape, causing material to discharge in an uncontrolled manner. (Img. 2)

"It's something we come across again and again during our service visits: customers refill feeders very fast and in very large quantities to keep the volumetric feeding phase as short as possible during the gravimetric cycle", Ralf Eikermann relates from experience. The Head of Customer Care responds, "But they achieve exactly the opposite – there is a lot of air in a large empty feeder hopper and this air must escape during the refilling process. If the dust sock is undersized, the air pushes towards the only open point, the screw tube causing a temporary uncontrolled high feed rate. (Img. 3 and Img. 4) The solution to this problem – either the sock needs to be cleaned regularly or utilize a self-cleaning jet filter.

A jet filter removes dust from the air that is displaced out of the hopper during filling. In contrast to normal dust socks it is also self-cleaning – it automatically cleans the filter

Img. 5: JetFilter



with a pulse of compressed air that blows trapped ingredient back into the process. In a continuous process, jet filter cleaning occurs at the end of the refill during the material stabilization phase without interfering with the gravimetric cycle. When very expensive or toxic materials are involved, a jet filter is a must, but it can also be a good option for other powders and fine pellets. "The best

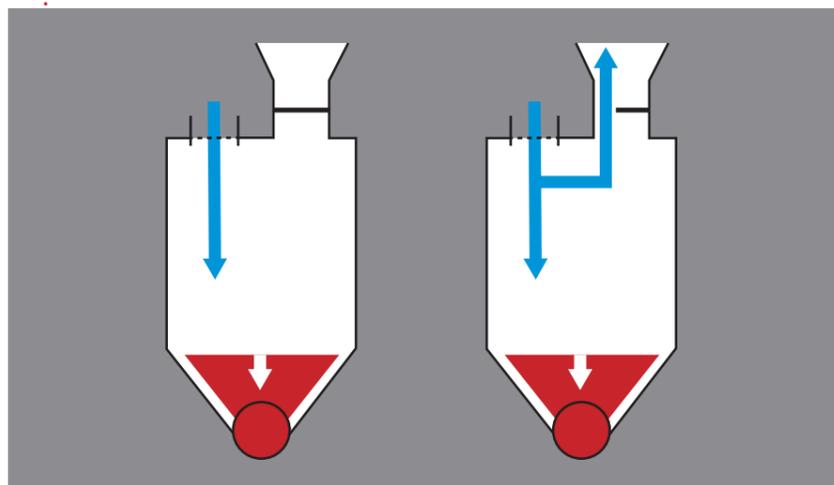
thing for users to do is seek our advice", Jochen Keesen, Head of the Technical Center, recommends. "We can help select the right filter and cleaning intervals." (Img. 5)

Maintenance is key

In the third demonstration line, a feeder was attached to a vacuum conveyor. Both units are separated by a knife gate valve. "But this valve has to be monitored regularly and maintained", relates Jochen Keesen, who set up the demonstration. "Otherwise product residues or a defective valve could result in the valve not fully closing and thus leaving a small gap." The vacuum conveyor then causes negative pressure inside the feeder, which has an effect on the scales. "As a result, the weight reading is reduced because there is permanent upward suction." This is displayed on the measurement screen as follows: the screw speed initially decreases briefly and then increases sharply, because this suction makes the hopper seem empty. Once the pressure evens out again, too much material is fed initially, because the screw speed is still too high. (Img. 6)

Many questions were asked during the demonstration in the Technical Center showing

Img. 6: The vacuum causes air to be sucked up from the feeding hopper through the leaking flat gate slide valve.



that Brabender Technologie had increased the visitors' awareness of "refilling" problems. "Continuous processes are becoming increasingly popular", says Ralf Eikermann. "For us that means increasing customer awareness of refilling issues." (Img. 7) ■

Img. 7: Visitors were able to easily follow the refilling demonstrations. Ralf Eikermann explains what the curve means.



You can find a film concerning this topic in our YouTube channel: refilling!



Putting on a show at LAKE CONSTANCE

The K show is the world's leading plastic show but the FAKUMA show located in Friedrichshafen attracts the plastics community during the K show off years. This year FAKUMA brought the plastics processing experts together for the 26th time.

"FAKUMA is smaller and more informal than K, but this show is highly regarded in the European market. We primarily meet with experienced process-focused users", Antonio Seising, Head of Sales at Brabender Technologie, tells us. The show at Lake Constance is no less international either – 47,650 people from 126 countries visited Friedrichshafen, where the trade fair center was once again fully booked. Nearly 2000 exhibitors showcased their plastics processing solutions: new materials, efficient production

methods, 3D and 4D printing methods, digitized and automated production solutions, affordable, robust lightweight structures – plastics customers are becoming more demanding and the industry is keeping pace.

Fast changeover, Low downtime

Brabender Technologie showcased two core applications in Hall A6: the FlexWall® Plus easy change feeder and the FibeXpert. FlexWall® Plus is an all-purpose loss-in-weight feeder for practically all free-flowing bulk

materials such as powders, pellets or chips. Its flexible polyurethane hopper features external massage paddles to ensure mass flow without ingredient damage. Interchangeable screw styles can be used, depending on the bulk material and performance range required. The FW 40 Easy Change version exhibited at FAKUMA 2018, featured a hopper, screw, screw tube and housing in a single structural unit. Quick release clamps connect this unit to the chassis and drive assembly to enable a quick and easy removal of

the housing, hopper and contained ingredient. Visitors were able to witness how easy it is to operate and reduce downtimes during product changeovers as the replacement continues feeding during the cleaning phase of the original unit. After a quick dry or wet cleaning, there's no reason why the user can't switch to another ingredient. This minimizes cleaning times, accelerates material changeovers and allows for more formulations using fewer devices. "The Easy Change is a very useful exhibit because we can demonstrate changing the feeder unit with little effort. This is a very useful product", Ralf Kanter relates.

Getting fibers to flow

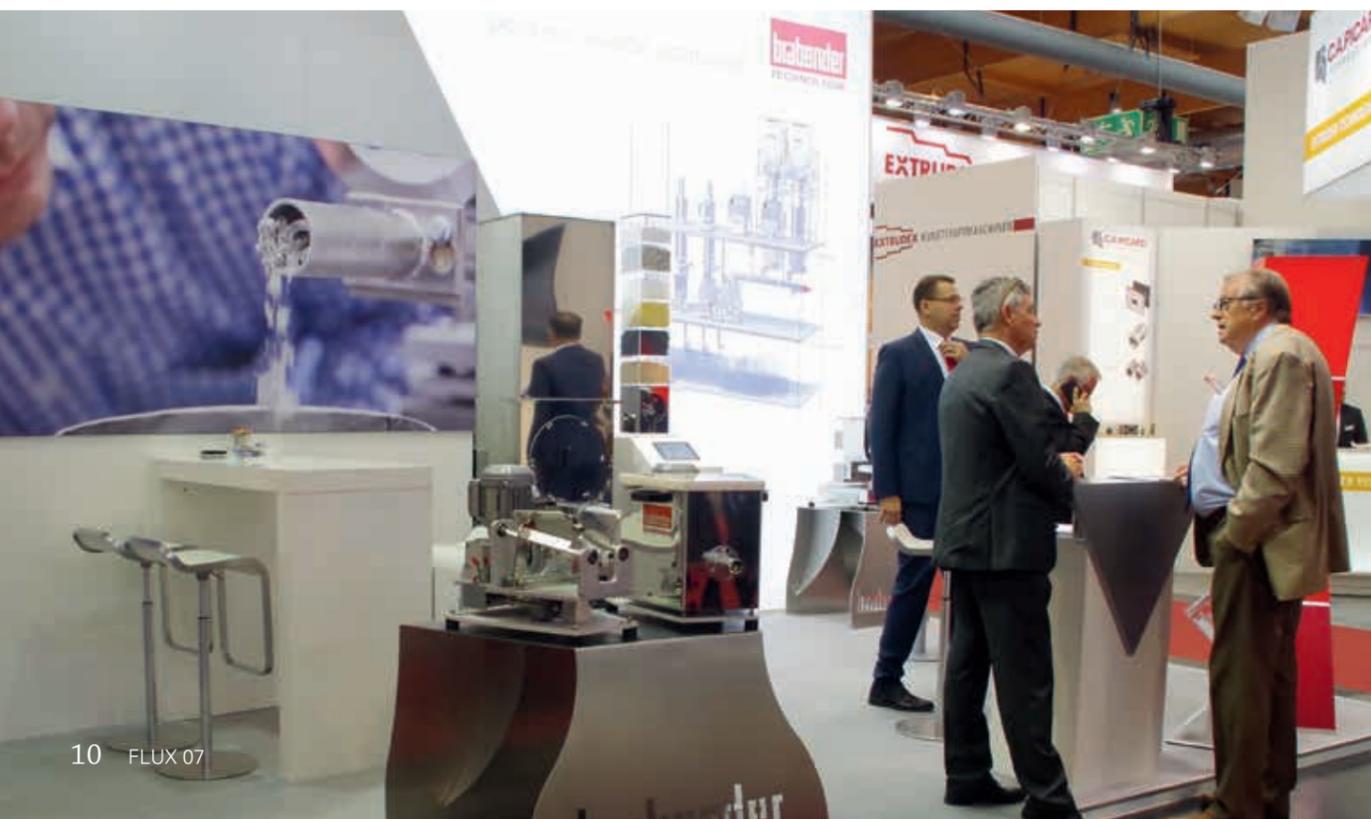
Another highlight was the FiberXpert fiber feeder which Brabender Technologie unveiled for the first time last year. This feeder has since been installed in different industries and is one of the special products in Brabender Technologie's portfolio. The FiberXpert is designed to feed

demanding, fibrous materials. These include, film-edge strips, wood shavings, carbon fibers or carpet clippings. Agitating these materials without damaging their structure is extremely tricky. This special feeder has this capability not only in laboratory conditions but also in production environments. "We showcased this feeder at the last FAKUMA, but this year we had the benefit of seeing the feeder in action", the sales expert explains. "This field experience is very useful for discussions during the show. We have much to report after one year of its market launch."

Planetary roller extruder with MiniTwin

A third device exhibited at FAKUMA was not at the Brabender Technologie booth but at the ENTEX Rust & Mitschke booth, a client in the same hall. A system was set up consisting of a planetary roller extruder in a laboratory setting including a temperature control unit with which substances like active ingredients can be mixed with carriers.

This system, which is designed to handle minimal quantities of just a few hundred grams per hour up to around 5 kg/h, uses a MiniTwin feeder to feed materials. Thomas Malzahn of ENTEX describes the new L-WE30 as the Erlenmeyer flask of the 21st century: "We are offering product development departments, particularly in the cosmetics industry, an alternative to conventional systems." The MiniTwin is an integral part of the system. ENTEX and Brabender Technologie have partnered with one another for several decades. Both companies are based in the Ruhr region and have completed a large number of joint projects. They also collaborate on innovations and new product development. ■



A MiniTwin complemented a planetary roller extruder at the ENTEX booth.



Ideal to demonstrate: rapid changeovers with the Easy Change.





SOLUTIONS
for mill and animal feed
production



Brabender Technologie exhibited a new Hygienic Design weigh-belt feeder at this year's Anuga FoodTech in Cologne.



Different screw profiles can be used depending on which ingredient is being fed.



Brabender Technologie provides the FlexWall® Plus also in Hygienic Design.

Mills and animal feed are essential for mankind's survival – without them bread or meat products would not exist. Their products are extremely diverse, ranging from flours and semolina, flakes and extrudates through ready-to-eat granola and feed mixes. The raw materials and manufacturing methods, in which feeders are critical in ensuring ingredient flow, are as diverse as the products themselves.

Brabender Technologie has been developing feeders for the food, plastics and pharmaceutical industries for more than 60 years and provides a broad range of industry proven equipment. "Screw feeders are a common solution for ingredients with poor flow properties including sticky and powdered ingredients such as flour", says Guido Obler, food specialist at Brabender Technologie. Spiral, blade or twin concave screws are used, depending on product characteristics. "Special screws with progressive pitches ensure a particularly gentle feeding process for sensitive products."

Consistent screw filling is important

A constant screw fill level is important for accurate, continuous feeding. To ensure that

the screw does not cause bridging in the feeder, agitators can be used to keep the ingredient in motion and deliver consistent mass flow. Model DSR (single screw) or DDSR (twin screw) feeders feature an agitator with a horizontal shaft that ensures that the screw is evenly filled along the entire length of the screw trough.

Model DVT vibratory tray feeders are suitable for delicate ingredients such as extrudates, nuts or freeze-dried products, which could be damaged by an agitator. Guido Obler explains the feeding principle: "Vibration causes the ingredient to be discharged freely from the weighing hopper onto the tray, and vibration amplitude controls the flow rate."

Gentle handling of bulk materials

Another option that is exclusive to Brabender Technologie is the patented FlexWall® feeder with massage paddles. "The flexible polyurethane hopper is agitated with external massage paddles and therefore avoids direct contact with the ingredient." The feeder's trapezoidal shape promotes mass flow into the feed screw and also provides a key benefit to plant layout, the expert explains: "Given its design, several

FlexWall® feeders can be arranged in a circle around a central feed point to save space." All components that come into contact with the ingredient can simply be detached from the base in a few quick steps and then easily cleaned.

Like all Brabender feeders, the FlexWall® is available in both volumetric and gravimetric versions. Loss-in-weight feeders offer maximum precision to control feed rates and to monitor manufacturing processes. An important process feature of operating continuous loss-in-weight feeders is rapid refilling. Since volumetric feeding occurs during the refill process it is important to keep the refill as short as possible. To do this, the refill rate should exceed the feed rate by at least a factor of ten. However, smart, self-learning Brabender control algorithms can maintain high feeder accuracy during refill if the cycles are repeatable.

Versatile and fast: weigh-belt feeders

Weigh-belt feeders are also suitable for continuous processes. They are great for higher feed rates and low headroom applications as they remove the ingredient directly from the storage hoppers. "Brabender Technologie's

weigh-belt feeders are common in the manufacturing of granola bars, for example, where they are used to feed cereal flakes or nuts", as Guido Obler explains from his experience.

All the feeders mentioned are available in Hygienic Designs and conform to EHEDG guidelines. They are easy to dismantle and quick to clean. Corners and edges are rounded and components have smooth surfaces to allow easy cleaning. ■



FAMILY CELEBRATION

60⁺¹
YEARS 1957-2017

Being unable to have a 60th anniversary last year due to construction of a new facility, Brabender celebrated with a customer oriented event known internally as "60+1". This event was a great success and allowed Brabender to put on a great show at its new home.

Canada, Russia, India, Dubai and China: all employees were invited to this celebration and were present, identified by the bright red polo shirts they wore. Guests included customers, business partners and of course the Brabender family members. Everybody was welcomed by General Manager Bruno Dautzenberg, Duisburg's Mayor Sören Link and the General Manager of the Lower Rhine Chamber of Industry and Commerce, Dr. Stefan Dietzfelbinger. The fact that Brabender Technologie has retained its identity as a family business, despite all its growth, globalization and constant competitive pressures, particularly impressed the Mayor. "And therefore, I would not only like to congratulate the company on its anniversary, but also congratulate its employees on the company they work for."

Tours and demonstrations in the new building

The program of events began shortly after the speeches. Small groups were formed for the German- and English-language tours. After a short tour of the production facilities, experts, set up demonstrations in the Technical Center to show feeder refilling issues (article on page 4). Guests could follow the demonstrations on large screens showing how, for instance, a clogged filter or a jammed valve can have a serious negative impact on weighing and feeding during the refilling process.

A simulated remote service support was also demonstrated in the Technical Center. A Brabender technician posing as a customer made a live call to the remote maintenance team regarding a feeder fault. A large screen was set up for the audience to view both parties interacting simultaneously online. This was a great way of presenting this service to a wide audience and demonstrating the benefits of Brabender remote service called Team Viewer.

To finish off the tour, the group entered the main building entrance where there was an exhibition of historic and modern Brabender Technologie equipment and control systems. Staff were available to chat with visitors and answer questions.

Relaxed and sociable

Of course, food and drink was an important part of the event. Various vendors served treats such as specialty coffees and Italian ice cream. Ruhr region specialties like curried sausage and pilsner were highlights at the event. Some of the entertainment was provided by the Kay Grossmann Band, who ensured a lively mood. Those who fancied a bit of exercise were able to demonstrate their dexterity on the Segway course. The charity "Deutschland rundet auf" also had a booth at this event. Brabender Technologie

No distance too great: colleagues traveled to Duisburg from all over the world; pictured here is Team China.



supports this charitable organization, which finances projects intended to fight child poverty. In addition to the familiar "Please round the total up!" at the supermarket checkout for private individuals, companies can also use this charitable body as a platform for demonstrating social commitment – Brabender Technologie employees are setting a good example and inspiring others as well to join in.

This shared anniversary celebration was enjoyed by both guests and employees. However, once the guests had departed, employees from around the world sat together for a long time – after all, such international, casual get-togethers don't occur every day. However this time they coincided with a 60th anniversary plus one! ■

"A global market leader, brand new, state-of-the-art corporate headquarters and personnel that you can always rely on – you could also say that Brabender Technologie is ready to face the future."



Sören Link
Mayor of the City of Duisburg

"60 is a special anniversary, because only a handful of companies reach this age. A lot has happened during this period, especially in the field of engineering. Many congratulations on this achievement!"



Dr. Stefan Dietzfelbinger
General Manager of the Lower Rhine CIC

The Lower Rhine CIC congratulated the company on its anniversary by presenting a certificate. Pictured f.l.t.r.: Horst Vohwinkel and Bruno Dautzenberg (both General Managers of Brabender Technologie), Dr. Stefan Dietzfelbinger (General Manager of the Lower Rhine CIC), Sören Link (Mayor of Duisburg), Dr. Günter Kuhlmann (General Manager of Brabender Technologie)



Guests were able to see the impact of filling problems live during three experiments in the new Technical Center



EVENT FEEDBACK:

"I visited Brabender Technologie here for the first time three years ago and the new building did not yet exist. The company really has come on in leaps and bounds, which is why I wanted to take a look for myself here."

Armin Felder, Becorit

"We are very proud to partner with Brabender Technologie, working together is definitely a pleasure and very effective – things can definitely continue that way. We feel appreciated as a partner."

Friedrich Fackert, Fritz Fackert Company

"What do we wish Brabender Technologie for the future? That

things continue as they have up to now! We are thoroughly satisfied."

Frank Duchardt, Eltherm

"Most people with whom we work have known us for decades. There are plenty of long-serving employees at Brabender Technologie, and the same applies to us. That is ideal."

Richard Procutta, Kunststoffwerk Voerde

"Companies like Brabender Technologie are shaping the future of the Ruhr region and we hope they continue to do so for the next 60 years!"

Thomas Malzahn, Entex Rust & Mitschke

To give you a taste of what the atmosphere was like, we recorded the event.



A live hook-up with the Remote Maintenance Center provided new insights into Brabender Technologie's range of services.



Some customers still remember it: the 150F weigh-belt feeder dated 1978 functioned using proximity switches and had no load cells. An adjustable transformer delivered weight control.





Peter Schell heads Brabender Technologie's Documentation Department.

"Things never GET BORING"

Write it down to stick around – even politicians do this. Equipment is not allowed to be delivered to a customer without proper documentation. Writing and providing this documentation is a job for specialists.

Peter Schell took over as head of the Documentation Department about 20 years ago. Shortly after taking over he formed a solid team with Silke Askerc and Tanja Lippert with the help of a translation consultant. "Although documentation complexity has increased substantially in the last 20 years, we have always been able to successfully reorganize", he relates. Paper has long since disappeared, digitization has streamlined the current process and will continue in the future: "We are currently setting up a doc portal to make the documentation available to external users." At the

same time the portal performs an internal-use archiving function.

Communication is everything

Archiving and traceability are a major issue within the department. Documentation must be kept available over the entire service lifetime of a machine and updated, if required. "Modernization and retrofitting keep presenting us with challenges", Peter Schell tells us. An update often causes the lifecycle of an old machine to expire and a new one is created with new specifications. Its documentation would then require to be updated.

This new documentation however is generally, more comprehensive and complex. For example, when certificates dating from the original year of manufacture are required for "old" components – the "Docs" team begin the hunt. "The bulk of our work is research – looking for the required information and documents. We therefore have to submit many requests which involves a great deal of communication – we couldn't do our job otherwise." From the word "go" the 3 colleagues from Docs work in parallel to manufacturing, at the end of which documentation is added to

the machines. Once the order has been approved, a delivery timeline is scheduled. At this point, the docs team must determine the languages required for documentation and if any modifications to the equipment need to be considered. The documentation planning process, including any translation into the required languages, starts with this information. Overall the department manages documentation in 26 languages, some with country-/order-specific supplementary documents. "But we restrict ourselves to official EU languages – for example we use Portuguese but not Brazilian Portuguese. Otherwise the effort involved would be too much", Peter Schell says by way of qualification.

A liability issue

"If an order is changed during the course of production, we need to

know, otherwise the documentation is incorrect", he explains. That then has legal implications. "The EU Machinery Directive requires that accompanying documentation corresponds to a machine's as-built state. Otherwise the delivery has a flaw, for which Brabender Technologie GmbH & Co. KG is liable. If something happens in a customer's production facility and incident's occur, then the documentation forms an important part of the investigation."

Peter Schell regards developing new products as the greatest challenge and at the same time, the most fun. "As an engineer I really enjoy communicating with my design engineering colleagues. As the Docs team we incorporate the user's perspective, which always varies." Larger projects can involve working closely together

with subcontractors, whose documentation also needs to be included. These projects require additional documents like assembly instructions for the service engineers. Final documentation of equipment is provided to the customer at the end of the process. This is referred to as "as-built" documentation, which also includes any modifications performed during commissioning. "Documentation is dynamic, it needs to be updated every time there is a modification in order to ensure immunity from liability." The more complex feeding processes and projects become, the more challenging the documentation is as well. For Peter Schell and his colleagues this is a welcome challenge: "It never gets boring, because everything is always in a state of flux." ■

This is where it all comes together: the heart of the Documentation Department.





THERE'S ALWAYS ROOM for improvement

Quality management has one primary objective – customer satisfaction.

Standards – auditors – audits. There's a sparkle in Waldemar Podworny's eyes when he hears or reads these words. Other people would wrongly believe this primarily involves a great deal of time and effort and would prefer to hide. However, this is Waldemar's element and where he wants to be. "ISO 9001 is an improvement standard and focuses primarily on customer satisfaction. It requires consistent quality management with the goal of delivering continuous enhancement and evolution. It is therefore 100 percent in line with our corporate objectives", the Head of Quality Management at Brabender Technologie explains.

An improvement standard

Many sections of the current ISO 9001 standard read like a good management practice manual. It emphasizes the importance of quality management, responsibilities for corporate managers, responsible handling of resources, and a process/risk based organization. Products and enhancements must be forecasted and quantifiable. "And despite that, it is not a perfection standard, it is

a continuous improvement standard", is how Waldemar Podworny describes the approach. "Making mistakes is not entirely a bad thing, quite the opposite in fact. They provide opportunities to analyze and to innovate. In our company there is a culture of honest criticism. That's because being able to take criticism means approaching mistakes in a positive frame of mind and being receptive to genuine, successful growth. Making a mistake is always unpleasant. Yet anybody who makes a mistake and does not rectify it has already made a second mistake! We therefore believe that dealing with mistakes in a fearless manner is an important prerequisite for effective quality management."

For many major companies ISO 9001 certification is essential for doing business together. That's why Brabender Technologie has been certified since 1994. Since then, a minor annual audit and a comprehensive audit held every three years have ensured permanent effective screening. It is not just participating companies that are under permanent

observation, so too is the standard itself and is regularly modified – most recently in 2018. Since then processes and risks are being scrutinized more closely. More than a million companies in total are certified. "ISO 9001 generates confidence in the fact that the partner company also prioritizes quality and customer focus. This gives the standard considerable market strategy importance", Waldemar Podworny emphasizes.

Getting employees on board

This continuous strive for improvement involves change which causes employees to leave their comfort zones. Of course, transition also creates burdens. "At Brabender Technologie we have experienced just that with the new building and the accompanying structural and organizational alterations", says the QSM manager. "Such changes often give rise to uncertainty and are initially met with rejection, especially when various processes are reorganized in parallel. Change is gradually accepted by employees as they start new practices, adapt to new ways and gain positive experiences."

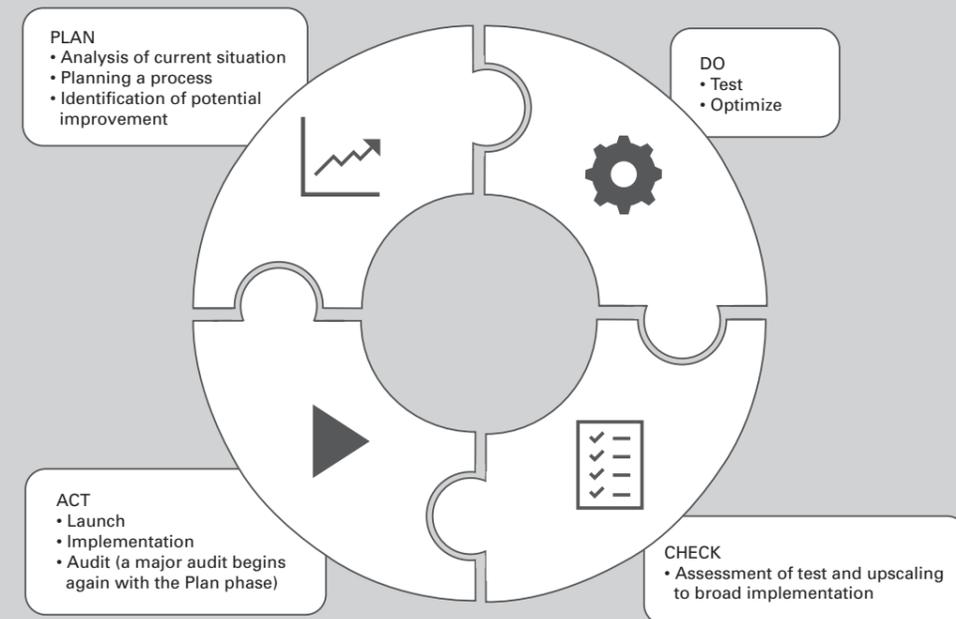
From the perspective of the quality manager, periods of change are particularly exciting, because new processes require validation and possible adjustment (see Quality Cycle box as well). This delivers enough material for the next audit, as the benefits derived from restructuring are indeed of major interest to the auditor. "Our objective is to improve even more. ISO 9001 helps us to achieve this and adds transparency to the progress we make." As Quality Manager, what Waldemar Podworny always sees first and foremost is potential. "I agree with chinaware manufacturer and politician Philip Rosenthal: anybody who stops improving has ceased being good at what they do." ■

INFO

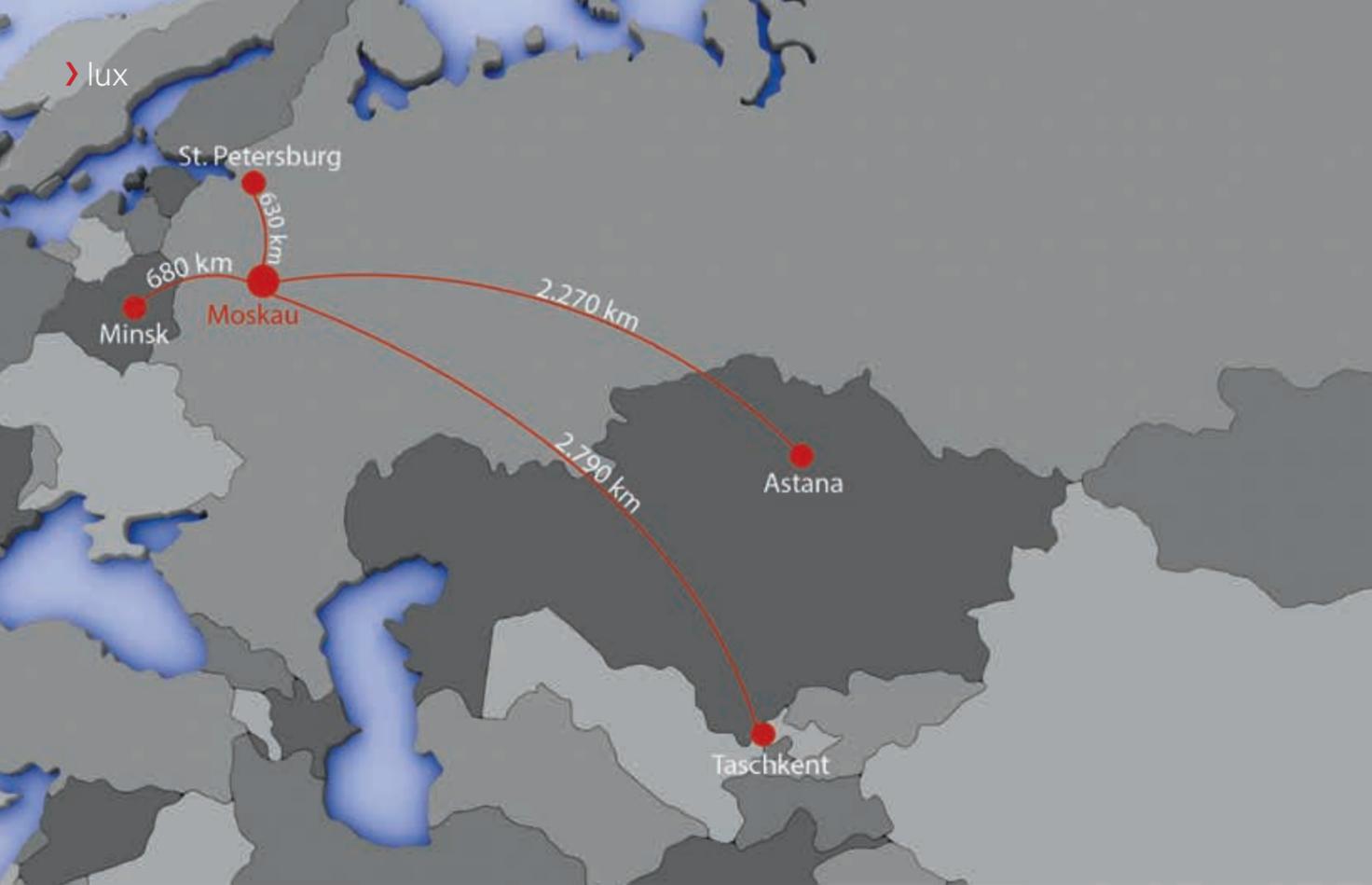
THIS IS HOW CUSTOMERS BENEFIT

- Analysis of customer satisfaction
- Continuous improvements
- Monitoring of complaints
- Unequivocal quality promise
- Clear allocation responsibilities
- Transparent processes

Quality Cycle



The process-focused approach is based on four main processes that transform an input into an output. The standard considers these and compares target values contained in plans with actual values. Where these differ, improvements and changes are defined and scheduled.



Growing IN RUSSIA

Russian customers are demanding. They know exactly what they want and are tough negotiators. "We Russians take a rather unemotional and very critical approach to customer relationships. Facts and arguments are all that matter to us", Julia Krasilova, General Manager of Brabender's Russian subsidiary, relates. The "OOO" or 'Obshchestvo s ogranichennoy otvetstvennost'yu' (Russian: Общество с ограниченной ответственностью), the local version of a limited liability company (LLC) has been in business since December 19, 2012. "But we have operated in Russia for much longer than that", says the long-serving Brabender employee. "Brabender has had a representative office in Russia since 2003. However, it was not permitted to conduct any commercial activities." An OOO can sell equipment and spare parts,

provide services and drive business in Russia forward much better.

Target industry: food

Plastics, chemicals and food are the major target industries in Russia, and Brabender Technologie sees growth potential particularly in the food sector. "Our customers are usually mid-sized companies. These are privately owned firms, given that large corporations in Russia often conduct business via subsidiaries or distributors", Julia Krasilova explains. The three Moscow-based Russian employees look after what is geographically a very large territory.

In addition to Russia they also look after other countries in the original Eurasian Customs Union – Kazakhstan and Belarus. Devices from

Brabender Technologie are EAC-certified and therefore permitted to be transported and sold in the territory of the Eurasian Economic Union EAEU (Belarus, Russia, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Armenia). This means that all national certificates of conformity from these countries are not required.

Yet "Service Vostok's" activities extend beyond the borders of the EAEU. Russian service technician Viktor Ukolov has already commissioned a number of installations in Uzbekistan. There he looks after a chemical industry customer based in Qarshi as well as a major food producer in Tashkent. This is a distance of 2,790 kilometers!

Moscow is the central trade fair location

In Russia a great deal of commercial life is concentrated in the Moscow and St. Petersburg conurbations. The capital's share alone of the country's gross domestic product is around 20 percent. This is also where all the important trade fairs take place – the highlight for Brabender Technologie is Interplastica, which colleagues from Duisburg regularly attend. In 2019 Brabender will be exhibiting at this leading trade fair for the 16th time, where nearly all customers and many new potential partners are represented.

Contact with headquarters in Duisburg is very close. German colleagues Dominik Becker, who is Head of Sales Asia, and sales executive Manuel Maurath are in daily contact with their counterparts in Russia. The working language is German, which all three Russians speak. Everyone meets in Germany for events, sales meetings and at the very least "K", the major plastics and rubber industry trade fair in Düsseldorf. "Continuous communication is a must – it is very important for all of us", Julia Krasilova emphasizes.

Reliable partners are a great help

Important services for the Russian market include the provision of technical detail. "Any spare part that is not accompanied by meticulous documentation in Russian may not be imported into Russia." Overall, doing business in Russia involves a great deal of paperwork and expense. "Fortunately, we have a very reliable shipping partner – DHL Global Forwarding – to help with customs formalities and in this respect, provide excellent support", Julia Krasilova relates. "Normally we require just one day for customs procedures." Service and quick aftersales follow-up are also key issues for Brabender Technologie in Russia. ■

Victor Ukolov and Julia Krasilova serve the regions customers from Moscow.





Horst Vohwinkel in his German office

Dear customers, partners, and fellow employees,

In this issue of FLUX, I would like to take the opportunity to bid you all farewell. I am leaving Brabender Technologie at the end of 2018 and going into retirement. I can look back on many successful years full of tremendous experiences. I am delighted to be able to share several memories with you.

When I joined our business on January 1, 1985 as Technical Director, the company was still relatively small and manageable. At a headcount of just 63, we generated sales of around five million Euros. Major changes were due, the patent on the Bin Activator had expired and several competitors were making inroads into the market. Furthermore, the dealership agreement with Atlas Weather-Ometer was terminated and our involvement in the weath-

ering devices business ended. We pressed ahead with enhancing our entire range of equipment. However, we focused on developing our sophisticated gravimetric feeding systems, which has ensured our current success as a company and will continue to do so in the future.

At this point let me first thank the founding family, and Carl Wilhelm Brabender in particular. Given his entrepreneurial foresight, he had recognized the need for a bulk materials technology product. Thanks to his vision, this line of business was embedded in a new independent company Brabender Technologie KG in 1957. He laid the foundation for our future success. Furthermore, he gave two deserving senior Brabender OHG employees the opportunity to acquire a stake in the new company. Together with two other mechatronics engineers they formed the founding team of the start-up business.

On January 1, 1992 Mr. Alfred Hauptkorn and I acquired shares from the Managing Partner at the time, Mr. Werner Pryka. This meant that we were also joining the Management Board. We understood that in order to grow sustainably and be commercially successful, we need to be globally aligned. Given that we already had a considerable portfolio of equipment that had been installed in numerous countries and that providing customer care services from Duisburg was no longer either effective or sufficient, we needed to take action. For this reason, we started at an early stage to establish subsidiaries and branches and search for agencies in our most important markets.

In subsequent years our international business has since enabled us to become a genuine "global player", with a local presence in nearly all parts of the world. Our objective was to provide advice and services to customers in their local languages through our global Brabender network. The establishment of branches in Canada and China is a good example of this. Many people ask us what's the key to our success. Our customers and partners from all parts of the world acknowledge the fact that the name Brabender Technologie aligns with technology leadership, service quality, availability and trust. This has not changed to this day and is our intention and aspiration to keep it that way. If I could make a parting wish, it would be exactly that and that the founding family carries on this tradition.

Since our competitors have defined us as both a role model and a target, we have never had time to rest on our laurels. Even milestones like the development of the FlexWall did not

slow us down. Our aspiration is to remain world-class by providing new and improved equipment. The owners also set high standards as shown by their willingness to invest. We have underpinned our future viability in the form of a new building incorporating a large Technical Center and production facility. The Technical Center in particular gives Brabender Technologie a completely new range of innovation and product development opportunities. State-of-the-art manufacturing opportunities are the foundation for very efficient, cost-effective production of our equipment.

Our employees around the world put a great deal of passion and commitment into their work to ensure our success, a true example of the Brabender Technologie spirit. I have worked together with many of them over a long period, for which I am very grateful. Without their ideas, commitment and energy, shared success would have never been pos-

sible. Every single employee carries responsibility and always focuses on the customer. We tackle challenges together with positivity and conviction – this is the spirit of Brabender Technologie, and I have always been able to rely on it whenever making decisions.

Over the course of many years I have assumed responsibility and applied all my creativity and passion for the benefit of the company. In the past five years I have shared this responsibility with Mr. Bruno Dautzenberg, whose fresh ideas have added plenty of momentum to our evolution as a company. When my departure was announced last year, Dr. Günter Kuhlmann, who is taking over my areas of responsibility, joined the Management Board. As a specialist for control systems and digitalization he will take a new approach in these key technologies. I am certain that my colleagues on the Management Board and our employees will continue to tell our success

story. They have skills, passion and a sense of responsibility as well as profound humanity and empathy, which are always a key to success in an otherwise brutal business world.

On December 31, 2018 I will be stepping down as General Manager and shareholder and retiring from the company. I should like to express my heartfelt thanks for all the long withstanding, trust-based relationships with our customers and suppliers, which I regard as something very special. I am delighted and privileged to have been able to work together with you all for our common good. I wish all employees in Germany and abroad, our agencies, their families and partners, our business partners and suppliers all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Horst Vohwinkel

WE SAY THANK YOU!





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