

Journal



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futronic around the world

The direct line

futronic is a global player. Across the world, there are more than 880 glass manufacturing plants using complex automation solutions from the company in Tett nang. In order to acquire customers, sell innovative products and manage extensive After Sales activities in key markets, the control system specialists put their trust in sales partnerships with system manufacturers and a network of company representatives.



futronic around the world: The control system specialists from Tett nang are at home in all markets

Germany is currently sinking into a deep sleep, while the sun is already rising over Taiwan. In the southeast part of the capital Taipeh, Milion Shen, CEO of the Libbey Industrial Company Ltd. is already sitting at his desk early in the morning, paging through the product specifications for the new IS machine controller FMT245 from futronic. In the afternoon, a visit to HWA HSIA Glass in Hsinchu nearly 100 kilometers south of Taipeh is on the schedule. The company is one of the largest glass manufacturers in the Asian region with glassworks in Taiwan and China—and one of futronic's most important customers. HWA HSIA buys machines and units which have often been previously used, renovates them and then brings them up to current standards using control components from the specialists in Tett nang. Since the beginning of this colla-

boration in 1992, futronic has delivered around 45 control systems for more than 35 plants. The man who played a leading role in these deals is Milion Shen. This native Taiwanese has been traveling back and forth between China and Taiwan on behalf of futronic since 1989. A total of eight companies in the container glass industry are in his customer file. „Our products are technically quite demanding and cannot simply be sold through a traditional mail-order outlet,“ explains Michael Preuß, who manages futronic, together with Wolfgang Lachmann. „So what we need is a direct line, our rep on site, who can approach customers in their native language, and who knows the culture as well as its customs and, of course, its national legislation.“ Without question, the customers also require this, adds Marc Meersschat, sales manager



Wolfgang Lachmann
Michael Preuß

Dear readers,

There is no other subject that preoccupies companies more than the global financial crisis. We too are keeping an alert eye on current developments. Nevertheless, we are remaining calm about the whole situation. We have good reason to do this. As we look back at a successful fiscal year in 2008 with record sales revenue of 8.1 million Euros, it points us forward to a future where our prospects are anything but gray. We are producing under normal conditions and have enough orders in place to keep us busy until February 2010. The major contributors to thank for this are our international representatives we introduce in the lead article. Not only that, but we are nearing the goal we had of increasing our sales percentage in the area of custom machine engineering from 17% to approximately 25%. The positive development of our company and its double-digit growth rate makes us confident of the coming future—despite the crisis. With this in mind, we hope you will learn a lot while reading this issue!

Sincerely,

Michael Preuß
Wolfgang Lachmann

»Table of contents

futronic worldwide	» Page 1
The direct line	
Imprint	» Page 2
In real-life	» Page 4
Annealling lehr control system	
Customer profile	» Page 6
Saint-Gobain Oberland	
News	» Page 7
District admin visits futronic	
Inside futronic	» Page 8



at futronic. „We go to numerous trade fairs as we always have and present our products and make ourselves available to answer questions and have personal discussions.“ But this is not enough. According to Meersschaut, „Customers expect suppliers to come and present their products on site.“ (see interview on page 3) After Sales Management, that is, providing customer service after the sale of a product, also plays an important role in this. And they expect futronic specialists to help them solve problems. Shen talks with the plant technicians on site to get a feel for the special requirements and needs of the customer and reports back to the upper management of futronic in Tettngang. „Shen knows



Milion Shen,
Taipeh (Taiwan)

perfectly what our customers need and what we can offer them,“ explains Preuß. At times, this results in extensive projects, in which futronic engineers develop specific solutions in close collaboration with the customer.

Four specialists manage the Asia markets

In addition to Shen, three other partners in the Far East and South Asia belong to futronic's sales and service network. Venito Bastian from PT. Victory Indotrading based in the Indonesian capital of Jakarta has been working for futronic since 2005. From his office on the south side of the metropolis of millions, Bastian works with thirteen customers from Indonesia, Malaysia and Vietnam. Lar-



Kim Shi Kyung,
Seoul
(South Korea)

ger projects are currently not on the schedule, explains the father of four. „But we are on the verge of closing new orders for two important glass manufacturers here in Indonesia.“ European products, especially from Germany, are in specific demand by his customers, Bastian shares. His job is to make sure that they also get these products—from futronic, of course.

Mohamed
El Saharty,
Cairo (Egypt)



The third man for the markets in the Far East and South Asia is stationed in South Korea. Kim Shi Kyung from Sungbong Ind. Corporation in Seoul manages customers such as Samkwang Glass and the Kumbi Corporation and six other glass manufacturers. Kim studied materials science with a focus on metallurgy. Before he came to futronic, he worked for various companies in the chemical as well as nuclear and plastics industry. Finally, Pedro B. Ascano Jr. at ACE Products & Technologies, Inc., based in Manila, serves customers in the Philippines on behalf of futronic.

As Shen makes his way to HWA HSIA Glass, Mohamed el Saharty is preparing for the coming day of work at the same time a few thousand kilometers to the west of the Taiwanese island.

El Saharty is one of three representatives, who cover the markets in North Africa and in the Middle East. He has his office in a Cairo suburb with the beautiful name Heliopolis. El Saharty lived two years as a high school student in the USA. After returning to the Nile, this father of two went on to further education at the A.S.T, the Academy for Science and Technology in the Egyptian city on the bay, Alexandria. In 2003, El Saharty took over as industry representative from his father Galal El Saharty and became the youngest business man in the Egyptian glass industry. His customers include 28 companies from all over the world. He has been working on behalf of futronic for a year now.

Glass market with a future: North Africa

„Egypt is a glass market with a future,“ says El Saharty. The conditions for a prosperous industry are in place. The strategically favorable location in northeast Africa, rich natural gas sources and the nearly limitless raw material of sand as well as low wages attract not only local companies but also investors from abroad. Despite the current global financial crisis, nearly all of the manufacturers in this area want to expand their product lines in the mid term or even re-equip. El Saharty: „I am very confident that futronic will profit from this positive investment environment.“

The markets in the following countries are still in the development phase: Algeria, Morocco, Libya and Tunisia. However, the prospects are good – here too, it is clear that low energy costs and a large source of natural gas are

»Imprint

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»Report



Dr. Abderrahmane Henni,
Algiers (Algeria)

providing economically attractive options. In order to have a presence in what are referred to as the Maghreb countries and to be able to manage to the best level possible, futronic has been working with Dr. Abderrahmane Henni since the end of September 2008. Henni was professor at the University of Boumerdes near Algiers, where his lectures included glass technology. Most of the engineers and managers in the glassworks of Algeria studied under him. He has contact to almost all of the glassworks in the region; but he also gathered his experience on the job. The PhD in materials science was the project manager for the first float glass plant in Algeria. Almost at the same time, Marc Meersschaut found a representative in the Iranian market. The assignment to also offer even better customer service in Iran was one Mehran Vijeh

from Teheran accepted. After his studies in the Iranian capital, the chemical engineer started collecting experience at the glass factory, Shisheh Va Gas. After this, he managed production at Gamin Glass for eight years and was responsible for numerous large projects. Mehran Vijeh knows the industry and has excellent contacts, including companies such as Mina Glass, Shisheh Va Gas, Razi Holding and Hamadan Glass. According to Meersschaut, „We are happy that Mehran Vijeh belongs to our network.“

Sales partnerships with system manufacturers in America and Eastern Europe

More will follow. Marc Meersschaut is staying on top of things and is continuing to expand futronic's sales and service network. Currently, he is focusing his search for representatives for the Gulf region and South Africa. Other markets, however, are continuing to be managed directly from Tett nang. Since Marc Meersschaut speaks Spanish, he is the perfect contact person for customers in South and Central America. Alone in these countries, there are more than 45 plants using control technology from Tett nang. „The cultural differences are not as great

Mehran Vijeh,
Tehran (Iran)



as with the Arabic and Asian countries, and there is basically no language barrier,” explains Meersschaut, who grew up multi-lingually in Belgium and has just returned from a trip to South America. futronic operates in the USA and Canada without representatives. In North America, customers are managed by Michael Preuß in Tett nang; the majority of these companies are glassworks in the Saint-Gobain Group, to which the company has been maintaining a close relationship for many years. In addition, futronic is cooperating there as a part of sales partnerships with GPS Glasproduktions-Service GmbH in Essen as well as with Heye International GmbH with its headquarters in Obernkirchen. The same applies for Eastern Europe: there are futronic controls being used on every system built by the two German machine manufacturers.

»Interview

An interview with Marc Meersschaut

„Customer relationships have time to grow“

One of Marc Meersschaut's most important tasks is to expand futronic's global partner network. During this interview, he explains the marketing strategies of the company and the requirements for the representatives.

futronic Journal: Mr. Meersschaut, many companies working with futronic GmbH around the world maintain sales and service branches in their most important markets. You decided on a different model. Why?

Marc Meersschaut: Previously, we managed our customers on a personal basis. For many years we traveled a lot in order to nurture existing customer relationships and to establish new ones. We were often able to develop contacts with industry experts. Very close relationships based on trust were the result.

Experience shows that our sales model functions very well. A network with futronic branch offices in the individual markets would not be an alternative.

futronic Journal: Doesn't this neglect the important, direct contact with the customer?

Meersschaut: The glass industry is straightforward and rather conservative. This means that there are few changes ever, whether on a structural or on a personal level—customer relationships have time to grow. Of course, we know each of our customers, and they know us. That is and will remain important. For this reason, representatives are a part of our company and act, so to speak, as an extended arm in individual project teams. In Western Europe, especially in the German-speaking region, we are, of course, always personally on site.

futronic Journal: You would like to expand your sales and service network and look for



Marc Meersschaut

additional representatives. Why is it so difficult to find suitable candidates?

Meersschaut: The pool of potential candidates is, on a global scale, quite small. I use different sources of information and approach possible candidates directly, for instance, at trade fairs.

futronic Journal: And what requirements do they need to fulfill?

Meersschaut: They need to know the market very very well and provide the corresponding references. Furthermore, the personal chemistry with the futronic consultant must be right, of course. Then conditions are negotiated.



New development lowers error quota and reduces operating costs

Saint-Gobain Oberland has modernized two annealing lehrs at their Essen location. The electronic control system comes from futronic. This newly developed system designed especially for the glass manufacturer lowers error quotas and refitting times, thereby reducing operating costs. With this futronic has added another strategically important component to its range of products for the container glass industry.

The traditional safety technology in the control system for both annealing lehrs at the Oberland plant in Essen had become outdated. Since the end of March, an innovative control system from futronic, tailored to the individual requirements of the complex cooling processes required in glass production, has been in service. In close collaboration with the Oberland specialists, futronic designed the electro-technology, developed the application software and constructed the control panel systems. „Technologically, the project is very sophisticated,” states Alexander Körner, the sales manager responsible for the project at futronic. The customer’s

tight schedule was an especially difficult challenge for the futronic developers. From the first briefing to commissioning the systems, the whole project took only seven weeks, instead of the usual twelve. Körner reports: „Our entire expertise and decades of experience definitely came in handy during this project.”

Optimal operating conditions in heating and cooling zones

The futronic controller includes a number of innovations, for example, the automation of quality-sensitive operating processes. A specially implemented article management

system now allows, for instance, the individual control unit parameters in the annealing curves for more than 200 glass container types to be saved in the control system and called up on the touch screen. When articles are changed, the operator only needs to choose the new article on the control panel. This loads all of the control unit parameters automatically. Previously, all of the parameters such as tuning nominal values had to be manually adjusted in the heating and cooling zones. Inaccuracy was therefore pre-programmed. „The new control system significantly decreases refitting time as well as the error rate due to incorrect input,” explains Körner. Now optimal operating conditions are always the norm in the heating and cooling zones. In addition, the new operating terminal enables the operator to detect, localize and eliminate disturbances more quickly.



All of the aggregates in an annealing lehr are displayed in a graphical overview, including important parameters such as the temperatures in heating and cooling zones, the speed of the conveyor belt and others. This allows the operator to always keep the status of the individual aggregates in view.

Pleased with the positive feedback from the Oberland production: Alexander Körner, sales manager and responsible for the project at futronic.





The feedback from the production workers responsible for this area at the Essen plant has been consistently positive. Körner states: „The people are especially enthusiastic over by the simple and user-friendly operability of the new annealing Lehr control system.“

Ethernet as channel of communication

The annealing Lehr control system has a freely configurable Ethernet interface. For instance, this interface enables connections to superordinate process guidance systems for transmitting system states and evaluating productivity. An important feature in the new annealing Lehr control system is the connection to the futronic E-timers. This also lets order status information such as job changes or station-reduced operation to flow into the system. This information is essential for temperature control in the annealing Lehrs and therefore for quality assurance. The systems previously used were not able to fulfill these functional requirements. In addition, the system can be maintained remotely online

via Ethernet, which can significantly simplify resolving disturbances in an emergency.

futronic controller as a global plant standard

During the call for tender, the electronic control systems specialist was able to hold its own against multiple competitors. „futronic is an important technology partner. The collaboration has withstood the test of time,“ says Josef Harscher, manager for electro-technology, in justifying the decision. The development of the control system for annealing Lehrs for Oberland adds still another strategically important component to futronic’s range of products targeted at the container glass industry. From now on, futronic will be providing its customers a seamless product range for production processes including everything from shearing glass to the cold-end coating of glass containers. The prototype of both annealing Lehrs at the Essen plant will be tested and further developed in the next few weeks and months under real-life conditions. If the system proves itself, the technicians at Saint-Gobain Oberland plan on making the futronic controller a plant standard across the globe.

17.03.2009 13:14 msb

Rezepturname:

Datensatzname:

Eintragsname	Wert
Zone 1.1 Oberer Alarm Links	10
Zone 1.1 Unterer Alarm Links	10
Zone 1.1 Brenner Ein Stufe 1 Li...	5
Zone 1.1 Brenner Ein Stufe 2 Li...	7

Datensatz gelesen

In the recipe management, up to 200 different container types with their specific parameters can be defined—either at the annealing Lehr control system on site or offline on a standard PC. The data can then either be transferred via the integrated Ethernet interface or onto a USB stick.



»Info

The futronic controller for the Oberland annealing Lehrs consists of the following hardware components:

- Siemens S7-300 PLC controller
- Siemens G120 frequency drive
- Siemens MP270 control panel
- Eurotherm control unit for emergency operation
- Freely-configurable Ethernet interface



Glass containers for beer and hazelnut spread

Saint-Gobain Oberland can look back on a long tradition. Everything began 1946 for the jar manufacturer at the Bad Wurzach location near Lake Constance. Currently, the company is among Europe's leading manufacturers of glass bottles and containers for food and drink.

At the beginning, there was peat. The organic reed sediment was a decisive factor in founding the company in Bad Wurzach: The gas from the peat was the fuel originally used to fire the melting vats. Seven years later, the operation was expanded to accommodate mass production on an industrial scale. This became the corner stone of the glass manufacturer's success story. During the subsequent decades, Saint-Gobain Oberland AG in Germany experienced strong growth with new plants in Neuburg, Essen and Wirges.

Saint-Gobain Oberland has been a part of the French conglomerate Compagnie de Saint-Gobain since 1991. Under their umbrella, the German company has developed into the largest manufacturer of bottles and jars in Europe. More than 4,200 employees produce a total of approximately 12.5 million glass containers daily in plants in Germany, Russia and Ukraine. In 2008, the company generated a corporate revenue of nearly 560 million Euros.

Trusts proven partners: Josef Harscher, director of electrical engineering.

Symbiotic relationship with futronic

In order to ensure sustainable success, the company has been consistently investing in modern production technologies. „futronic has been an important and reliable partner for many years in this endeavor," responds Josef Harscher, responsible for the electrical engineering department at the technical center. Saint-Gobain Oberland and futronic have created a special, almost symbiotic relationship. Before the Tett nang company was taken over by Jetter AG in 2006, the control systems specialists had been a part of the Saint-Gobain Oberland Group for 20 years. Even today, the glass manufacturer is not only one of futronic's most important customers, but a development partner as well. In order to develop innovative



control solutions for process automation on behalf of the glass factory, futronic receives permission from time to time to test its prototypes under real-life conditions and to develop them for the market.

Environmental protection is also a part of the Saint-Gobain Oberland tradition. Already more than 30 years ago, the company began to systematically collect recyclable glass, thereby making the company a pioneer in the area. Depending on the color of the glass, up to 90% of the glass used in production can come from recycling.

The Oberland glass specialists offer not only hard products but also various consultancy services as well as aid in designing glass packaging, for instance, beer bottles. Indeed a classic: the Nutella jar (for perhaps the best known hazelnut cream ever). Since it was introduced on the market in the mid 60's, this jar has been manufactured in the plant at Bad Wurzach. Every year, more than 100 million jars with that distinctive silhouette are delivered to Ferrero in Stadtallendorf in Hessen. And of course, the soccer jar for the world championship in 2006 came from Saint-Gobain Oberland.

Important visit – District administrator Lothar Wölfle

Admin praises ability to innovate

futronic GmbH is considered one of the „hidden champions“ in the region and is defying the current crisis with full order books. The administrator for the district of Lake Constance, Lothar Wölfle visited futronic in April.

„Regional economic development is for me as the administrator of the Lake Constance district an important issue, of course,“ said Lothar Wölfle as he was greeted by both futronic general managers, Michael Preuß and Wolfgang Lachmann, and the mayor of Tett nang, Bruno Walter. „Some companies are exciting enough to make me want to take a closer look. futronic is definitely one of them.“ One of the purposes of his visit to the company was to raise awareness of the top performers in the high tech region of Lake Constance. „I would personally like to get to know the companies and gather information first hand as well as find out what the framework conditions are that we need

to create in order to support these companies, especially in the current economic situation.“ futronic has experienced strong growth in the past few years, and just last summer, moved into two new company buildings in the Bürgermoos commercial park in Tett nang. „We are happy that futronic has remained loyal to the Tett nang location,“ said Mayor Bruno Walter. Both regional politicians were impressed by the tour of the administration building and the production hall. Wölfle commented: „For more than 100 years, inventive talent and the ability to innovate have made an important contribution to the economic development of the region around Lake Constance. In order to keep it this way, we need companies like futronic.“



Important visitor in Bürgermoos: District administrator Lothar Wölfle and Mayor Bruno Walter getting first hand information from Wolfgang Lachmann and Michael Preuß about the development of futronic GmbH in Tett nang (right to left).

FMT24S in use at the new NuvC glassworks

The traditional manufacturer Noelle + von Campe Glashütte GmbH (NuvC) put its new glassworks into operation at its Boffzen location. At the heart of the cutting-edge facility are three IS machines each with twelve stations from GPS Glasproduktions-Service GmbH in Essen.

FMT24S controllers by futronic ensure an optimal production workflow. One special challenge has been the integration of data from different sources onto one user interface. To do this, the software engineers at futronic developed visualization software which models the complex movements of the servo-mechanisms and aids the operator in managing the parameters.

Photo detector unit LSE4 replaces LSE3

Effective immediately, the new LSE4 unit photo detector will be delivered with the hot end ware reject systems for the machine controllers EPRO-12ST, EPRO C, CIMOG-12ST, CIMOG-24ST, FMT24S as well as ASDR2. Compared to the LS3, the LS4 system includes several cost-saving innovations. For instance, sensor and amplifier are now installed in one cabinet, and the purge air no longer blows directly on the lens. Furthermore, the system is now easier to clean. The old model is no longer available; however, spare parts for it can still be ordered. Retrofitting from LSE3 to LSE4 is no problem. The change to a new generation had become necessary because the photo detector on the LSE3 had been modified by the manufacturer to such a degree that it was becoming difficult to produce accurate clear glass detection.

»Company network

VFBW confirms managing board and starts lecture series

Virtuelle Fabrik Baden-Württemberg (VFBW) confirmed its managing board at the annual general meeting in March. VFBW is a network of ten independent operations, including futronic, in the Lake Constance region. From now on, VFBW will develop its contacts in Switzerland and Austria. „Especially in economically difficult times, it is important for companies to work more closely with each other,“ says Edmund Dehnel. In addition, a lecture series for entrepreneurs has been called to life in the network. At

the kick-off on April 6, Carl-Dietrich Sander, a company consultant, shared excellent tips on how companies can overcome the financial crisis.

VFBW's old and new managing board: Edmund Dehnel is chairman, his assistant is Andreas Wich (starting from front right). Gerold Krug is treasurer, Wilfried Reichle and futronic general manager Michael Preuß were confirmed in their office as cash auditors (starting from back left).



»Employees in the spotlight

Jasmin Rochlitzer

In contact with the whole world

Whether the customer wants to buy an entire plant, needs a spare part or wants to settle repairs: Jasmin Rochlitzer takes care of it all. The 23-year old Tettng resident completed an internship as an administrative assistant at futronic with additional qualifications in international business management with fo-

rein languages. Only good has come from this education—she communicates with partners all over the world on a daily basis. During her internship, she learned the ins and outs in many different departments, including warehousing, purchasing and financial accounting. „I thought it was great that I was already able to work independently and take on responsibility during my intership,“ she reports. No wonder that she completed her training as one of the 30 best students in the German counties of Ravensburg, Sigmaringen and Lake Constance. To celebrate graduation, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry sponsored a party at which the best students received certificates and a small gift. And from futronic, Rochlitzer received a permanent work contract.

Contract confirmations, invoices, customs forms: Jasmin Rochlitzer advises customers from many different countries.



»Service anniversaries

Defying the crisis with a constant staff

Competent and enthusiastic employees are the most important capital a company can have, especially during turbulent times. For this reason, we decided on a more sustainable personnel policy—continuity instead of impulsive action. Our employees show their gratitude for secure jobs in part with many years of company loyalty. And we are grateful in return and would like to congratulate the following for their years of hard work:



Elke Kränkel,
foreign language secretary

Elke Kränkel will be celebrating her 20-year company service anniversary in July. As a foreign language secretary she takes care of all international correspondence in the order processing department, usually in English.

»Guest performance

Intern from Indonesia

From Jakarta to Tettng

The coldness of the German winter was quite a challenge for Rahadi Irawan. Plus he managed to arrive in Germany on an especially cold February day. Otherwise, he feels like a bug in a rug in Tettng. The 21-year old student from Indonesia is the first foreign intern to come to futronic. During his six months, he will experience through the testing, design and development departments. „We are looking to see where his interests lie, so that he can take on small tasks,“ says managing director Michael Preuß.

Rahadi studies mechatronics in Jakarta. He found his way to Tettng through Venito Bastian, the futronic distributor in Indonesia. Thanks to family connections in Europe, he already spoke a bit of German and English when he arrived. Rahadi is a Muslim and immediately asked where the closest mosque was. Different cultures, identical interests—the young Indonesian also spends private time with his colleagues, out and about and on the town. In addition, he lives with students at the electronics school in Tettng, where it is easy to make friends.



The first intern from abroad: Rahadi Irawan from Indonesia quickly got used to the German climate and dove into his work with enthusiasm.

„Our company operates globally,“ says Michael Preuß. Because of this, he can very well imagine that Rahadi Irawan will not be the last futronic intern from abroad. For Rahadi and his German colleagues, this has been an exciting time. And the temperatures should also now be a range that will make him feel right at home.



Manfred Schneider,
commercial director

Manfred Schneider has also been at futronic for the past 20 years. He started in April 1989 as a financial accountant and soon became commercial director. He has also been an authorized signatory since February 2006. Schneider is responsible for accounting as well as the warehouse and purchasing.



Alexander Petuker,
production manager

Production manager Alexander Petuker can look back on ten years at futronic. As an expert in occupational safety, he takes care of procedures for accident prevention and for handling hazardous substances in the company. Petuker is also an authorized environmental management representative.