Dear readers,

It has been a while since the last issue of FocusOn. The world has carried on turning and is currently facing new challenges, which I am sure we are all watching with mixed feelings and trying to understand. And the Felix Schoeller Group’s world has also been evolving and changing. We have taken a major step forward in our company’s development. I shall briefly outline that below.

The highlight of last year was without a doubt our new joint venture in China – Winbon Schoeller New Materials. It is a crucial component of the Felix Schoeller Group’s growth strategy. At the beginning of last year we were still deeply involved in the negotiations around this joint venture. It was then officially launched in September 2017.

You can read all about it in this issue of FocusOn, including reports by the first employees who have been working in China as expats since autumn of last year, and by our former chief financial officer Peter Cornelißen, who has been living and working in China since March this year.

Another topic that we have been very involved with this year is the change of leadership in our company, which took effect on 1 July. We enacted this symbolically at this year’s shareholders’ meeting by passing on a baton – the baton the CEO uses to lead the company’s employees, like a conductor at the head of an orchestra. The change in leadership is another main feature of this issue.

Digitalisation is a megatrend of our times and one that everyone is talking about. Last year we decided to explore this area more closely. Turn to page 26 to read about what we mean by digitalisation and how we intend to use it and roll it out in the Felix Schoeller Group.

The third Felix Schoeller Photo Award was held last year and was a sensational success – in terms of numbers of entries, the international make-up of the participating photographers, and the quality of the work submitted. It goes without saying that we report on the Award in this issue. You can read more about it on page 34.

And last but not least, this year the Günzach mill celebrates 25 years of belonging to the Felix Schoeller Group. Buying Technocell AG’s decor paper operations in 1993 was a major milestone for the development of our decor paper business. And this business has now become one of the company’s mainstays – in fact, its most profitable. We take a look at how the Günzach mill has developed and hear the views of some of the people who work there.

I hope you enjoy reading this issue.

With kind regards,

Hans-Christoph Gallenkamp
Bring on the future – looking ahead to the Felix Schoeller Group’s strategic development

Hans-Christoph Gallenkamp, CEO of the Felix Schoeller Group since 1 July this year, explains the company’s strategic development going forward

Mr Gallenkamp, what underpins your strategic thoughts?

Hans-Christoph Gallenkamp: We have developed Vision 2030 to address the Schoeller Group’s long-term orientation. It identifies the direction of travel we need to take and provides orientation for all the company’s employees. I have also presented Vision 2030 to our shareholders because it is equally important for them to understand the company’s long-term prospects.

What are the main elements of Vision 2030?

Gallenkamp: We basically anticipate that the Schoeller Group will continue to grow in the future, in part organically, and partly through acquisitions. This growth will enable us to proactively shape our future. We want to still be a family business in 2030 – independent, in good financial health and with production sites in all the growth markets and economic areas in the world. The Schoeller Group will be an agile, innovative company that is attractive to customers, employees and shareholders alike. Our actions will be shaped by the principles of sustainable management.

What does that mean in concrete terms?

Gallenkamp: Vision 2030 is based on three pillars: economic goals, organisational goals and goals related to employees. There has to be interaction between these three sets of goals to ensure the long-term success of the Schoeller Group.

The first of the economic goals is sufficient profitability. The Schoeller Group’s business portfolio is well balanced, i.e. there is no one-sided dependence on a single product group. We have production sites in Europe and Asia for all growth segments and we intend to use them to seize the growth opportunities these markets offer us. Our customers value our solution-driven approach and our attractive products and services. Digital solutions, which we started to develop last year, contribute to our sales and earnings.

To achieve our organisational goals we draw on our operational excellence in all areas based on a well-defined management system. Responsibilities and interfaces are clearly defined and provide the foundation for a learning organisation. Digitalisation supports internal processes and contributes to the group’s success.

The staff-related goals rely on the motivation to perform and the commitment of all employees. We take our corporate social responsibility seriously at all locations and consistently implement local safety and sustainability standards.

To sum up: we want to remain a family business. To do that we need sufficient profitability and further growth. But we also need motivated and skilled employees who work well together to make the company a little bit better each day. The Schoeller Group has excellent prospects of continuing success in the future.

What progress have you made along your growth path this year?

Gallenkamp: There are two aspects to 2018: a strategic one and an operational one. We have made very good progress towards our strategic goals. The key factors here are the development of our Chinese joint venture, Winbon Schoeller New Materials, which has made great progress. But, in this connection, we must also mention the new paper machine we have built in Penza, the site of our Russian joint venture Mayak-Technocell, and also the acquisition of the assets and site of Alameda, an American converting company, and the Indian joint venture Felix Schoeller India. All of these activities count towards our aim to establish local production sites and put the Schoeller Group on a more international footing and thus contribute towards its growth. We can be very happy with the results of 2018 in this respect.

How do your employees view the company’s increasing internationalisation?

Gallenkamp: There is some concern that our foreign investments, especially in China, will undermine the German mills and that we will transfer production to China in the medium term. But this is unequivocally not the company’s strategy. We are investing in China in order to gain access to this huge market, something which is not possible to do through imports. We will continue to produce all our specialty products in Germany, which is where we have highly trained employees with their outstanding know-how and vast experience. We will produce what are known as commodity products, which are on the whole cheaper, in China. We can sell them in markets that are not able to buy the higher-priced products from Germany. At the end of the day, our investment in China is also safeguarding our German sites. And we will continue to invest in Germany, although not in capacity, but in technology, innovation, effectiveness and efficiency.

You have given us a comprehensive explanation of the Schoeller Group’s strategic development. What about the operational side of things?

Gallenkamp: Unfortunately the picture there looks somewhat different. This year we have had to cope with rising raw material costs, especially pulp but also titanium dioxide and energy. These high costs, which we were able to pass on to our customers to a great extent, have had a direct impact on this year’s earnings, but they have also had an indirect impact in that they have caused growth to slow down. At the same time, we have noticed that our markets have generally become more volatile. Fluctuating exchange rates and increasing trade barriers are also relevant here. We have therefore already started to put countermeasures in place this year in the form of Programme 20_22. Our aim is to ensure sufficient profitability for the Schoeller Group, which in turn will allow the company to continue along its path to growth.

What is Programme 20_22? Is it a pure cost-cutting programme?

Gallenkamp: This programme’s top priority is to increase profitability by achieving greater effectiveness and efficiency. In this respect, it is not a pure cost-cutting programme, even if the ultimate aim is to achieve cost savings. We are looking at simpler, leaner recipes which will result in better productivity for us and our customers, at simplification along the entire supply chain, and at driving down HR and non-HR costs.

Driving down HR costs sounds like job cuts …

Gallenkamp: We are sticking to the path we embarked on in the mills some time ago with our Company of the Future project. This project is enabling us to address demographic changes. By making adjustments to processes and structures and introducing automation and digitalisation, our workflows are becoming more effective and efficient. This will mean we will not have to fill vacancies caused by employees reaching retirement age. The end result will be a reduction in staffing levels but it will happen in a way that is socially acceptable and does not involve compulsory redundancies. We will also roll out the Company of the Future project next year in the administrative areas of the business with a view to cutting HR costs there as well.

What other issues are important for the Schoeller Group’s development?

Gallenkamp: The first thing to mention here is our Digital Unit, which we have reported on in more detail elsewhere in this magazine. Its activities are directed both externally and internally. And, particularly with the activities that are directed internally, we are laying the foundations for implementing the Company of the Future project, especially in the administrative area.

The EASY project is also of great importance for us. It is placing our entire order processing system on a completely new basis. We want to use EASY to create optimised workflows, which will then result in efficiency gains along the supply chain. As things currently look, we should be launching it next year.

The process of change within the Schoeller Group will also trigger a need for professional development measures for our employees. With this in mind, we are currently consolidating all our personnel development schemes and over the coming months our recently developed strategy in this field will offer employees even better training opportunities to ensure their knowledge meets the company’s needs.

Ultimately, we are consolidating all our ongoing and future projects under one roof with the goal of making clear and well-defined project work possible and at the same time ensuring we are using the right resources for the right issues.

I am delighted with the commitment all our colleagues demonstrate and would like to thank them for their support and hard work.
Handing over the baton in the Felix Schoeller Group

The outstanding feature of 2018 was the carefully planned change in the company’s leadership, which came into effect on 1 July.

Hans-Michael Gallenkamp, who held a number of different roles and was responsible for the company’s fate for the last 40 years, most recently as chair of the advisory board, handed over to Prof. Andreas Georgi. Hans-Michael Gallenkamp was appointed to the post of honorary chair of the advisory board. Dr Bernhard Klefert, who has been with the Felix Schoeller Group for 25 years and has held the post of CEO for 12 years, has left the company and taken up the post of deputy chair of the advisory board.

Hans-Christoph Gallenkamp is the Schoeller Group’s new CEO. He had been the company’s chief operating officer since January 2017. The appointment of Hans-Christoph Gallenkamp sees a member of the Schoeller family once more at the helm of the company, which was founded in 1895.

Peter Cornelissen has stepped down from his long-standing position as chief financial officer (CFO) and taken on a new role. He will be concentrating on expanding Winbond Schoeller New Materials (WSNM), the joint venture that was founded last year in China. As such he will play a key role in the Felix Schoeller Group’s overseas strategy.

Gerhard Hochstein has been newly elected to the management board of the holding company. He has been with the company since April 2016 as executive vice-president in charge of Schoeller Technocell. As chief technology officer (CTO), Gerhard Hochstein is now responsible for engineering, research & development, technical purchasing, energy management, patents and business development. Stephan Igel, as chief sales officer (CSO), responsible for sales in the Technocell Division, is now also in charge of raw materials purchasing. There have been no changes in responsibility for production, with Georg Haggenmüller remaining in the post of chief manufacturing officer (CMO).

This means that the Felix Schoeller Group, which has a functional organisational structure, has the following management team: Hans-Christoph Gallenkamp (CEO), Georg Haggenmüller (CMD), Gerhard Hochstein (CTO), Guido Hofmeyer (CFO) and Stephan Igel (CSO Technocell).

Peter Cornelissen has stepped down from his long-standing position as chief financial officer (CFO) and taken on a new role. He will be concentrating on expanding Winbond Schoeller New Materials (WSNM), the joint venture that was founded last year in China. As such he will play a key role in the Felix Schoeller Group’s overseas strategy. He has been based in Longyou, China, since March 2018. Guido Hofmeyer, who to date has been responsible for the Felix Schoeller Division, has succeeded him as the Felix Schoeller Group’s CFO. His former position as executive vice-president responsible for the Felix Schoeller Division will be filled the beginning of next year.

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One for all – all for one

This motto sums up Hans-Christoph Gallenkamp’s stance on leadership. He believes that the tasks and responsibilities of the management board and all downstream levels of management must be clearly defined and taken on board: “Assuming responsibility means reliably delivering the results promised, asking others to be aware of risk and leading by example in this, motivating employees and providing professional development opportunities, and working every day towards making the company a little bit better and even more effective in providing what our customers need. We will be judged by our performance in the coming years. By that I mean each person’s individual performance and also the performance of the company as a whole. We are asking each employee to develop this performance philosophy in their area of work,” Gallenkamp explains. But, at the same time, he also calls for close cooperation and interaction with others: “The Schoeller Group is already too big and too complex for any single person, such as the CEO, to be able to keep track of all issues, of how they are interlinked and what the implications are. This can only be achieved if everyone is closely connected. We can only succeed by working together. And we must also be there for each other.”

Gallenkamp cites the driving force behind his commitment as being a basic love of working, combined with the sense of satisfaction that comes from seeing his work having an impact. As the new man in charge of the Schoeller Group and a fifth-generation shareholder, he feels a strong connection with the company’s tradition. Part of that is his commitment to keeping the owners of the company – the Schoeller family – on track and ensuring that they stick together. In accepting his new post at this year’s shareholders’ meeting, he promised the shareholders he would continue to pursue the path of growth for the Schoeller Group that his predecessors had embarked upon. He summed up his future-oriented approach in a single statement: “The future belongs to each and every person who wants to participate in it.”

Hans-Christoph Gallenkamp has been with the company since 1997. Born in 1969,
after leaving school he obtained a degree in paper engineering at TU Darmstadt and an international masters degree in business administration (MBA) in Canada, which he gained under the University of Toronto’s programme for working professionals. Milestones in his career with the Felix Schoeller Group include his job on paper machine 1 (PM1) at the Osnabrück mill and later his position as head of raw materials management in the extrusion process at the Osnabrück mill. Between 1999 and 2001, Hans-Christoph Gallenkamp was in charge of specialty base paper production at the Schoeller Group’s American mill in Pulaski, NY. From 2002 onwards, he was chief operating officer of the Technocell Division. This position included responsibility for marketing, sales and technology. As chief technical officer (CTO) Gallenkamp has been on the management board of Felix Schoeller Holding since October 2012. He took up the post of deputy CEO of the Osnabrück-based Felix Schoeller Group on 1 January 2015. He was appointed chief operating officer (COO) on 1 January 2017.

“A person who has to take a decision, but does not feel able to, will nevertheless take the right decision if they have to – and it will come from the heart.”

Dr Bernhard Klofat, the Felix Schoeller Group’s CEO for many years, sums up his motivation and commitment of the last 25 years with this quotation. He says himself that the honour of being at the helm of a German family-owned company with worldwide operations was not handed to him on a silver platter. A meeting with Hans-Michael Gallenkamp in 1992, then CEO of the company, led to his decision to work for Felix Schoeller. Klofat explained that it was not just a decision to work for the company but also for the person who represented it.

Born in Düsseldorf in 1958, Dr Klofat left school after passing his Abitur (equivalent to A levels) in 1976 and from then until 1979 trained as a business management assistant with Henkel KGaA in Düsseldorf. He then started a degree in business management at Ludwig Maximilian University in Munich in 1980, graduating in 1985. After completing his doctorate in 1988, he joined Klöckner & Co. in Duisburg, where he worked as an assistant to the board of management. In 1989, he became head of the company’s central accounting/business management department.

He started working for the Felix Schoeller Group on 1 January 1993 as head of the central commercial function. In parallel to this, he was appointed to the management board of the photographic and specialty paper business unit in October 1994. From January 1995 until the end of 2005, he was head of the Imaging Division with its three lines of business – photo, digital imaging and specialty papers. In January 2006, he was appointed as COO of the Felix Schoeller Group and was at the helm of the company from 1 January 2007 until 30 June 2018 as chief executive officer. During his time as CEO, the decline in the photo paper business, combined with the economic and financial crisis of 2008/2009, forced the company to undertake a major restructuring operation. As a result, existing fields of business, such as digital media papers and release liners, were expanded and new ones, such as nonwoven wallpapers, were developed. The internationalisation of the Felix Schoeller Group was driven forward, with the backing of the chair of the advisory board Hans-Michael Gallenkamp. The joint ventures in Russia and China were part of this. Dr Klofat will remain connected with the company in his role as consultant and vice-chair of the advisory board. He will spend some of his newly acquired leisure time in Oberstdorf and devote more time to his hobby – photography.
FOCUS ON WINBON SCHOELLER
Establishing international production facilities in growth regions around the world is one of the Schoeller Group’s key strategic goals. The Asian – especially Chinese – markets are a particular focus. In 2017 we set up a 50/50 joint venture with a Chinese partner – the Welbon Group. Our aim is for Winbon Schoeller New Materials to supply all the Schoeller Group’s growth segments for the Chinese and South East Asian market and also open up new markets for us. To do that we plan to invest in existing and new machinery.

After carrying out thorough and comprehensive screening of possible Chinese joint venture partners, we chose the Welbon Group, a family-owned pulp trading company and specialty paper manufacturer. The Welbon Group brought two production facilities into the joint venture – Zhejiang Winbon in Longyou, Zhejiang province, and Anhui Winbon in Shexian, Anhui province. These two cities are 200 kilometres apart. Longyou is the headquarters of the joint venture.

At the time the joint venture was set up, it had eight paper machines, nine coaters, nine cast coaters and various slitting facilities. Its broad product portfolio includes sublimation papers, glossy photo papers, matt coated inkjet papers and wallpaper base, thus overlapping well with the Felix Schoeller Group’s product portfolio. Other products offered are base paper for release liners, glassine papers, papers for pharmaceutical packaging and water transfer papers.

Grand opening
The joint venture was officially inaugurated on 15 September 2017. Members of the management of the two companies were joined at the inauguration by representatives of Chinese politics, the paper and forestry industry, the German Consulate, and the Chamber of Foreign Trade. Current and future customers were also invited.

Winbon Technocell
One of the key strategic objectives connected with the joint venture is to establish a foothold in the Chinese decor paper market. This is the only way to gain entry into this market, because it is virtually
Peter Cornelissen, aged 57, was born and bred in the Ruhr region of Germany. The Felix Schoeller Group’s former CFO is a strategically minded manager, but he is also a pragmatic man of action with a finely honed capacity for analysis. But Peter Cornelissen is also a team player: born in Essen, he played for his home football team as a young man. The Bayern Munich football team’s logo graced the wall behind his desk at company headquarters in Nuremberg. He is a devoted supporter of the Munich footballing champions. And he is an equally avid fan of his home team Rot-Weiss Essen, a club steeped in tradition. He is not just an armchair athlete; he also plays tennis with his wife. Very few people know that he occasionally picks up his guitar and plays music as a way to relax. Peter Cornelissen has been living and working as an expat in Longyou since March of this year. His job is to help ensure that the two family-owned businesses, Felix Schoeller and Welbon, can grow together.

**Mr Cornelissen, could you outline your career to date for us?**

Peter Cornelissen: I trained as a business management assistant with Krupp in Essen, because I wanted to build my career on a solid foundation. I then did my military service, after which I went to university in my home town of Essen. I graduated in January 1989 with a degree in business administration. My first step on the career ladder was with a small company, which also had business interests in the Far East. In 1990, I felt I wanted to work for a larger company so I moved to Köckner & Co AG, a trading company in Düsseldorf, where I was employed in the central accounting/business management department. I was later in charge of operational controlling for the energy division of the Köckner Group. In 1997, I moved to the company’s metal operations, where one of my jobs was chief financial officer for one of its subsidiaries.

**What made you come to Felix Schoeller in 2002 where you took over the management of the company’s commercial department?**

Cornelissen: I knew Dr Klofats, who was then CEO of the Felix Schoeller Group. We were at Köckner together and I worked for him for some of my time there. We had kept in touch throughout the intervening years. I had wanted to move to a medium-sized family business for a long time. The crucial factor in my decision to continue my career at Felix Schoeller was my interview with Hans-Michael Gallenkamp, the then managing director and today’s honorary chair of the advisory board. He took me to paper machine 1, which at the time was still producing photographic base papers, and showed me around the entire paper production department. I was impressed by Mr Gallenkamp. I was impressed by the mill. And I was simply fascinated by the production department. And that is still how I feel today, by the way. So my decision to move to Felix Schoeller was easy. I have never regretted it.

**Have your responsibilities changed in recent years?**

Cornelissen: I was responsible for all commercial affairs at Felix Schoeller Holding –
which includes accounting, controlling, finance, tax and the IT department – and later also supply chain management and purchasing. In particular my activities in purchasing meant that I started to look towards China and the Asian markets – to a degree, at least.

What is it that still fascinates you about Felix Schoeller and about the joint venture with your Chinese partner?

Cornelißen: Felix Schoeller is a family business that places the sustainable development of the company at the forefront of its activities. It has a clear strategic orientation, which it critically reviews – quite rightly – at regular intervals and, if necessary, revises in response to the changing conditions in the markets. Our company is flexible and thus able to meet the demands of the markets.

To do this, it draws on the outstanding and constantly growing, know-how that can be found across the entire company. Another outstanding feature that characterises the Felix Schoeller Group is its technological competence. Our Chinese partner, the Welbon Group, is, like Schoeller, a family-owned company that grew through its pulp trading business and then entered the specialty paper production business. The two family businesses are simply a good fit. Developing the technological competence in China and continuously improving it so that we can firmly establish ourselves in the markets of the future, embed our presence in China and continuously improving our understanding of the language and cannot even begin to imagine living in China. She was particularly impressed by learning Mandarin. I have also joined in. We have managed to pass the first practical tests in the country …

What is special about your Chinese partners?

Cornelißen: I was impressed by the discussions with our Chinese partners. I found them to be extremely constructive and forward-looking. They were always interested in advancing our common cause. And although the negotiations were tough when it came down to the details, we always managed to forge a personal relationship with the local people. The numerous talks we had were also future-oriented. I was particularly struck by the fact that we were able to establish and maintain a personal relationship with people from a different culture. I am proud that we achieved that, and it is the foundation for our future collaboration.

What is the difference between the Chinese and German way of conducting talks of this kind?

Cornelißen: The amount of time we invested in the talks took some getting used to. Our counterparts always had long discussions in Chinese which would then be interpreted into English. The perseverance and tenacity with which the objectives were pursued made a lasting impression on me. It often happened that agreements we thought we had reached were critically reviewed and discussed again in subsequent talks. So it took a long time to get the agreements drawn up ready for signing. I am convinced that we ultimately achieved a good result for Felix Schoeller.

Despite, or perhaps because of, the long, sometimes tough negotiations you conducted, you did not lose your motivation to go to China. What are the goals you have set yourself for your work in China?

Cornelißen: As I said earlier, my goal is to make the joint venture successful. In concrete terms this means that I would like to lay the foundations needed to achieve our short-, medium- and long-term sales and earnings targets. To do that we need to bring the projects we have initiated together to a successful conclusion. This does not just apply to the investment projects we have already instigated. There are also specific issues we need to work on in sales, research and development, production and, last but not least, the commercial departments. I would like to support our colleagues in China in this and, at the same time, act as the link man to the Schoeller Group.

Living in China is different from living in Europe. You and your wife began by signing up for a taster trip to China.

What were your impressions of the country and the people?

Cornelißen: I basically did not return with any new impressions. I had already had the opportunity to gain an idea of life in China through my many trips to take part in the negotiations. China is a vast country that is, of course, very different from Germany. I have to say it is quite a strange feeling to be in an environment in which you don’t understand the language and cannot even understand its characters. My wife and I realised that we had to learn Chinese – at least to a level that would enable us to deal with the little things of everyday life independently. I will give you just a few examples. The questions: How and where do I go shopping? When I am in the supermarket, how can I identify what products are inside the packaging? Or: how do I buy a train ticket? At the end of the day, you have to learn the basics of the language to be able to find your way around in everyday life to a reasonable extent. Jakub Li, one of our colleagues from the Shanghai office, fortunately accompanied us during our trip so that we did not have any problems resolving the issues I mentioned. A big thank you once more to Jakub.

How did you get on in the first weeks and months in China? What were your wife’s impressions?

Cornelißen: My wife was positively impressed by our new environment and different surroundings, by how attractive the cities are, and how good the infrastructure is. She was particularly impressed by the extent to which technology is used in everyday life. Just take the system of paying by mobile phone as one of many examples. It is almost no longer necessary to have cash on you. You pay for goods or services without cash, using your mobile phone, as a matter of course almost everywhere. It doesn’t matter if you forget your wallet, but you can’t forget your mobile.

As far as the language is concerned, I can tell you that my wife has already started a Chinese course. She is really enjoying learning Mandarin. I have also joined in. We have managed to pass the first practical tests in the country …

What has impressed both of you about the people you have met?

Cornelißen: I really have to stress that all the people we have come across have been extremely welcoming, open, friendly and helpful. We have the impression that we are really welcome.

What has particularly struck you about China?

Cornelißen: The huge number of people you see going about their everyday lives – on the street, at the airport, the railway station. It is quite remarkable. In rural areas, and also in the cities, you also see a lot of green space and very lush vegetation. The towns and cities are extremely clean and well looked after. I also have to stress that my wife and I always feel really safe. There has never been a critical situation in which we felt we were in danger. We had been a little concerned about that before we went to China – just because of how we imagined life there. The infrastructure is impressive. I must say that, by contrast with Germany, the trains run on time and stop where they are supposed to stop. An ultramodern
underground rail network is currently being developed in Hangzhou. That is all very impressive.

How did your friends react to your move?

Cornelißen: They were deeply impressed. And still are. Basically, they were initially speechless but then they all responded positively to our project. They think that embracing the challenge of living amidst a different culture is a brave decision on our part. By the way, many of our friends have already asked whether they can come and visit us in China.

Do you have family or personal obligations in Germany and how will you deal with them while you are away?

Cornelißen: Yes, we do. My mother is 86 years old and lives alone in Essen. We have now organised carers for her who will support her with her daily life. She lives in her own home, which is age-appropriate and fully accessible. The carers will look after her more intensively than before.

What advice would you give to colleagues who are entertaining the idea of going to China?

Cornelißen: They should prepare a little. There is some excellent literature that gives an insight into Chinese culture. My wife and I made extensive use of this and it gave us many tips about life in China. Other than that, I would just say: treat the people you meet with a positive attitude and with respect. In my opinion, openness and mutual respect are crucial.

You then went to the Technical University in Dresden. Why did you take that step?

Martorana: I was also fascinated by what goes on behind the scenes. I thought that the TU Dresden would be the ideal place for me to do academic work in my field. After four years of academic work there in the field of paper chemistry I gained my PhD.

What made you decide to opt for Felix Schoeller?

Martorana: It was clear to me from the outset that I wanted to be in a company that attaches great importance to research & development. That is the case in the Felix Schoeller Group. Investment in research and development is absolutely indispensable in the field of specialty papers. The Osnabrück-based specialty paper manufacturer is one of the most renowned companies in the market.

What potential to create and build something does China hold?

Martorana: There is huge potential. And more quickly. China can see that across all areas of the company. For example, in the course of my work in the research and development department to date, I have been able to file two patent applications in the field of sublimation printing. As a developer, I have plenty of opportunities to evolve with Felix Schoeller.

Can you describe your main responsibilities?

Martorana: I see my work as falling into two categories. On the one hand, there is the technical aspect consisting of individual projects. That includes, for example, sublimation papers, nonwoven wallpapers and release products. Excellent base papers are manufactured in China. Converting them...
and generating higher value added is one of our main tasks. The second aspect of my work is management. This is about building structures and strengthening processes. In other words: how do I gauge which ideas for projects have the greatest potential? How do I create a development project in a way that achieves the best result? What project management tools can I introduce that will be understood and ideally implemented in China?

Who supports you there?

Martorana: I receive full support from management, but I also have a personal assistant who helps me – in particular with anything to do with communication. My Chinese colleague Jamie Chen and I also work very well together. We complement each other superbly.

What can you improve in the joint venture within the scope of your job?

Martorana: Structured work is still not quite as good as it could be. I see one of my main tasks as being to combine the best of each culture. The ideal scenario would be a combination of structured work processes with flexible implementation and fast, dynamic processes. My Chinese colleagues sometimes have a hierarchical mindset. I try to motivate people and initiate lots of discussions and talks as a way of combining the two worlds and bringing out the best in the employees.

What challenges have you encountered?

Martorana: Communication is certainly a particular challenge. It is more indirect. The ideal scenario would be a combination of structured work processes with flexible implementation and fast, dynamic processes. My Chinese colleagues sometimes have a hierarchical mindset. I try to motivate people and initiate lots of discussions and talks as a way of combining the two worlds and bringing out the best in the employees.

What is the joint venture’s location in China like?

Martorana: Hangzhou, which is about 200 km away, is opening up, whereas the place where the joint venture is located is Longyou is more rural in character. However, China is no longer what it was ten or 15 years ago. The big cities have become very westernised. Hangzhou is a great city. It is one of the most beautiful cities in China. I am pleased to be living there. By the way, I live among many Europeans. As a city of seven million inhabitants, Hangzhou has everything you can possibly imagine. You can make friends very quickly. There are many expats who have been sent to China by large German companies. I can get to the paper mill in an hour on the train. But I also have a small apartment near the mill. As an expat, you can return to Germany after three years. Could you imagine staying longer in China?

Martorana: Yes, why not? I enjoy my work there. My contract to work in China ends in two and a half years. The major investments in new paper machines, in the production and converting departments will kick in in about one to one and a half years. Overseeing them is a unique opportunity that I would like to seize in China.

What advice would you give to colleagues who are entertaining the idea of going to China to play a role in the joint venture?

Martorana: You have to be open to new things. A lot of things do not work in the same way as they do in Europe. China offers gigantic potential for development. The country is very innovative and science-friendly.

How would you characterise the sustainability and the infrastructure in China’s cities?

Martorana: The infrastructure is excellent in the part of China we are in. Rail travel is close to perfection – delays are virtually unheard of. Cities such as Shanghai or Hangzhou will become even more important globally in the future. One of the reasons for that is that people in China learn quickly and implement that knowledge pragmatically.

Wolfgang Steinhauser is a Swabian through and through. The production manager in the joint venture in China is down-to-earth and practically minded. But he is also a team player. He is not easily thrown off balance. His main character traits include integrity, directness and good-naturedness. But his friends claim that he can also be somewhat stubborn now and then. In his spare time he rides an e-bike, plays golf and enjoys good food, which he also cooks himself. His favourite recipe is legendary: beef roulades with Swabian spaetzle. And he does not have to do without it even in China. Since June 2017, he has mainly been concerned in making sure that the six paper machines in Longyou I run smoothly and produce the products they are supposed to – some of which are new. He is now production manager on PM1 at Winbon Technocell and therefore once more working with the product he loves: decor paper.

Mr Steinhauser, how would you describe your career to date?

Wolfgang Steinhauser: I was a soldier in the German army for a few years. After that I worked for PWA Dekor and from 2004 to 2008 I was chief foreman with Munksjö Paper in the US. From 2008 until the end of 2010, I was production manager with a decor paper manufacturer in North Rhine-Westphalia. After a further step along my professional path in Lower Saxony, I joined Felix Schoeller in 2012, where I am very happy with my duties and responsibilities. I was line manager on PM18 with Felix Schoeller in Titisee-Neustadt from 2012 until I moved to China at the end of May 2017.

What prompted you to move to Felix Schoeller?

Steinhauser: Schoeller contacted me because they were looking for a machine supervisor at the Titisee-Neustadt mill. I had
only heard positive reports about Felix Schoeller. The company has a very good reputation in the paper industry. I made my decision to join the family-owned company in Osnabrück. The other deciding factor, apart from the company’s good reputation, was that Felix Schoeller makes long-term plans and investments and prioritises product development. The company also supports training and continuing professional development for its employees. I see those as essential criteria that testify to a good employer.

What are the fundamental characteristics of a family-owned company such as Felix Schoeller?

Steinhauser: Important strategic decisions are taken and implemented as quickly as possible. Our employer is very concerned about the well-being and health of its employees. It provides a number of programmes connected with that. Felix Schoeller invests in its continued existence and in the future – both in Germany and abroad.

What is the difference between the mill in China and the Titisee-Neustadt mill?

What is the difference between working in China and the Titisee-Neustadt mill?

Steinhauser: The difference for me personally is that I was responsible for one paper machine in Titisee-Neustadt. Here there are six paper machines with different product developments. The company also supports training and continuing professional development for its employees. I see those as essential criteria that testify to a good employer.

What is your main reason for deciding to go to China?

Steinhauser: Felix Schoeller put on a China Day in September 2016. It was open to anyone with an interest in China. During the course of the day, the planned joint venture was presented, along with some information about the way of life in China. I had often been to Asia but never to China. The presentations we were shown made me think that China is different from the other Asian countries. Incidentally, I was convinced from the outset that I would be able to make a difference in China. I also expected to be able to learn something new in my life with regard to work and culture. After my taster trip to China I discussed things with my family again – that is, with my grown-up son, parents and siblings – and then I firmly made up my decision: Off to China!

What is the biggest challenge?

Steinhauser: The major challenge is that I took on a post of responsibility rather than consultancy. The whole thing is a real challenge and is very time-consuming. But it also reminds me of the good old days when I started out in the paper industry. A great deal of patience and perseverance are called for. Overall I would say we are on the right track, but that we are going to have to invest considerable time and energy to reach our goal.

What advice would you give to colleagues wanting to go to China?

Steinhauser: Communication usually takes place via a colleague from the technology department. He speaks very good English. Other than that, there are now good translation programs that help me to say things in the way I want to. But I am also making an effort to learn Chinese, which at my age is harder than I anticipated.

Where do you live? Who do you socialise with in your free time?

Steinhauser: I live in a one-bedroom apartment in Longyou. I spend time with Emanuele Martorana from Felix Schoeller and also with a couple of Chinese colleagues. I also socialise with a Canadian and some British expats who live in Longyou. Colleagues from our German mills also come here quite often.

What are your hobbies and can you pursue them in China?

Steinhauser: I enjoy riding an e-bike, playing golf and eating good food, which I also cook myself. E-biking is a bit tricky around here. The road traffic regulations are somewhat individual. There are no road or forest tracks like the ones we have in the Black Forest, for example. And, unfortunately, there is no golf course here, either. But the Chinese cuisine in Longyou is fantastic. If you are looking for a Western atmosphere, it is a good idea to go to the big cities.

Do you cook yourself? Will you share your favourite recipe with us?

Steinhauser: I cook mostly at the weekend. Unfortunately, I don’t have enough time during the week. My favourite recipe is roulades with spaetzle. There is an online platform here called Taobao, where you can order any ingredients and any meal you like.

Would you make the same decision to go to China again?

Steinhauser: I would take this step again in exactly the same way without a second thought. People here are friendly and treat you respectfully, especially if you are older. You feel safe and in good hands. You get enough support with all the necessities of life and with sorting out any problems.

Emanuele Martorana from Felix Schoeller and also with a couple of Chinese colleagues.

FOCUS ON WINBON SCHOELLER NEW MATERIALS

WINBON SCHOELLER NEW MATERIALS

FOCUS ON WOLFGANG STEINHAUSER

WOLFGANG STEINHAUSER

Since May 2018 when PMI at Winbon Technocell started up, you have been in charge of decor paper production again. How has your work in China changed since then?

Steinhauser: I was impressed by the progress and all the new things here. Everything is very clean – at least what you see on the outside. The streets and squares are cleaned every day. There seems to be no limit to the money available for progress. You can see how the country is advancing each day at an almost frightening speed. Buildings are shooting up on every corner, modernisation work is being carried out everywhere They are investing in infrastructure and the environment.

What was your biggest challenge? How did you deal with it?

Steinhauser: The greatest challenge was the cultural difference. The solution was quite simple: I have adapted as much as possible. My Chinese colleagues have helped me with that.

How do you communicate with your Chinese colleagues?

Steinhauser: Communication usually takes place via a colleague from the technology department. He speaks very good English. Other than that, there are now good translation programs that help me to say things in the way I want to. But I am also making an effort to learn Chinese, which at my age is harder than I anticipated.

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What advice would you give to colleagues wanting to go to China?

Steinhauser: You need to think beforehand about the culture and local conditions. There are some major differences between the more rural towns and the big cities where you can get everything. In professional terms, you can put your know-how to good use here. It is always a challenge. I would advise anyone interested in taking this step and moving to China to go ahead and do it.

I would take this step again in exactly the same way without a second thought.
New capacities for the Russian market

Mayak-Technotecell’s new paper machine PM6 went into operation at the Penza mill in Russia on 10 September 2018. It will produce decor papers and inline-coated nonwoven substrates for wallpaper for the Russian market.

The Russian markets for decor papers and nonwovens for wallpaper production have good growth prospects. Over 50% of decor papers and 100% of coated nonwovens are currently imported. There is a huge need for local production, which was what prompted us to think strategically about building a new paper machine. Firstly, Mayak-Technotecell’s existing paper machine 5 in Penza is running at full capacity and, secondly, it is designed to produce decor papers only.

The requirements the new PM6 has to meet are high; the aim is for it to be a combi-machine, producing both decor papers and inline-coated nonwovens to enable us to respond as flexibly as possible to market conditions. The nonwovens will also be two-layered, whereas decor papers will be single-layered as usual. Thus, developing a technical concept was quite a challenge for Schoeller’s engineers, for those responsible for the project at Mayak, and for the machine manufacturers.

On 10 September everything was ready; the machine could be officially inaugurated. At the copy deadline for FocusOn, it was already producing market-quality decor papers. Production of nonwovens was scheduled for October.

New capacities for the Russian market

The PM6 in action, Penza

- Technical facts and figures
  - Web width: 2.30 m
  - Drive speed: 850 m/min
  - Inline coating of nonwoven papers
  - Nonwovens: two-layered, decor papers: single-layered
Digitalisation points the way to the future

Digitalisation has triggered a profound transformation in the economy as a whole and represents completely new challenges for virtually every business. For the Felix Schoeller Group digitalisation is a crucial transformation in the economy as a whole. It takes a three-pronged approach: development of digital business models along the value chain and digital services for today’s products and markets, digitalisation of internal business processes and workflows, and digitalisation of production to increase performance and drive down cost in line with Industry 4.0. Anett Hötzel, head of the Digital Unit, talks about the project team’s objectives, working methods and initial successes. As chief manufacturing officer (CMO) responsible for all the company’s production facilities, Georg Haggenmüller is driving forward digitalisation in the mills, in other words Industry 4.0 (4.0).

The Felix Schoeller Group will continuously improve its digital maturity over the coming months and years and become even more competitive. Digitalisation will contribute to sales and revenues and help the company to become even more effective and efficient. All that is part and parcel of future-proofing the company.

Digitalisation points the way to the future. A Digital Unit has been set up for virtually every business. For the Felix Schoeller Group digitalisation is a crucial transformation in the economy as a whole. It takes a three-pronged approach: development of digital business models along the value chain and digital services for today’s products and markets, digitalisation of internal business processes and workflows, and digitalisation of production to increase performance and drive down cost in line with Industry 4.0. Anett Hötzel, head of the Digital Unit, talks about the project team’s objectives, working methods and initial successes. As chief manufacturing officer (CMO) responsible for all the company’s production facilities, Georg Haggenmüller is driving forward digitalisation in the mills, in other words Industry 4.0 (4.0).

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Creating beacons in the digitalisation process

Interview with Anett Hötzel

Annett Hötzel (38) has a degree in media studies. She is a good listener, but she also has a lot to say. A graduate in media studies, she is now head of digitalisation with Felix Schoeller, tasked with developing and trialling digital business models. She knows her way around both the digital and the analogue world. She also knows how to get people on board and win them over to her projects. Calmly and virtually silently, she dictates the pace of developments.

After work, things get a little noisier: in her spare time she enjoys riding around the world with her husband on classic Vespas. They effortlessly cross the Alps on these scooters, or motor around the south of England. If she wants something a little nipper, she switches to a Suzuki SV 650 and opens up the throttle.

Ms Hötzel, what made you decide to work for Felix Schoeller?

Annett Hötzel: Sometimes coincidence plays a role in life. In my life, too. In December 2012, I saw an advert for a job at Felix Schoeller. The position of digital marketing and e-commerce manager appealed to me straight away. Felix Schoeller described itself well and made a professional impression. The job description was a perfect fit for me. Within two weeks, Felix Schoeller and I were in agreement that I would take up exactly this position in the company. It is a step I have never regretted.

Why was a separate company, T/D3sixty, set up?

Hötzel: Several factors underpin the decision to establish the Digital Unit as a separate company: first, this constellation ensures we have a high degree of flexibility to carry out rapid tests in the market. Or, for example, when we need to get contracts in place with suppliers at short notice. Speed and a very tight focus are fundamental to our work. Secondly, in this way we reduce certain liability risks for Felix Schoeller, the parent company. This set-up will also make it easier to work with start-ups in the future. And, last but not least, we are sending out a signal that we as an employer take digitalisation seriously.

Many younger potential employees find small, powerful units with flat hierarchies particularly attractive. We want to use this set-up to recruit creative minds who, on the one hand, value the sustainability of family businesses and, on the other hand, want to work in the kind of dynamic structures we often find in start-ups.

What was the result?

Hötzel: STYLINE and how our original idea can be further developed in several iteration steps. The website (www.mystyline.de) went live after only four weeks and has since been further developed in several iteration steps. Since the launch on 19 March this year, over 70,000 users have visited the website and some have placed their first orders. Analyses of the website traffic show that most users are from Northern Germany, and the number of men and women is balanced. We are currently carrying out further analyses in an attempt to clarify how we can benefit permanently from MY STYLINE and how our original idea can be implemented.

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What was your first major challenge?

Hötzel: Our initial digitalisation project was about identifying specific approaches to digital business models for our digital wallpaper product segment within a 14-week timeframe. We also wanted to gain experience with methods that are completely a matter of course for start-ups today to enable us to successfully run the first digitalisation project for the digital wallpaper product segment. That included conducting interviews with customer, but also creating prototypes that we continuously improve on the basis of customer feedback. We had to achieve all that in just a few weeks.

How exactly did you go about it?

Hötzel: We started to conduct interviews with all the players along the value chain in October 2017 in order to understand the needs and priorities of the different customer groups. On that basis, we then developed ideas for possible future digital solutions and services. We talked to more than 40 representative customers and then used the insights we gained to develop 78 different ideas in team meetings. From mid-October 2017, we then implemented the best four ideas as prototypes and used customer feedback to validate, hone and develop them further.

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What was the result?
Were you able to do all that by yourself?

Hötzel: That would not have been possible. We launched the project in conjunction with an external partner. We began by learning a lot about methodology. And then we had to use our newly acquired knowledge immediately. But the fastest way to learn something is to do it yourself. I also get a lot of support from the Digital Media Business Unit and, of course, from the wallpaper team. Adequate support from management is also crucial to our success – and they provide that support. The members of the board challenge us and analyse our results. But they also help us with advice and practical support.

Where are you on the digitalisation of internal processes and procedures?

Hötzel: Our goal is to create an internal digital beacon as quickly as possible to gain broad-based acceptance among the workforce.

Are employees frightened of digitalisation?

Hötzel: That’s hard to say. Of course, some people have questions about what we are doing or how it might affect them. I am happy to explain it to them in detail. Digital Day, which took place in Osnabrück in January 2018, was a good opportunity to do that. The atmosphere was very positive. Lots of colleagues had good ideas about which internal processes could be simplified with digital solutions. Scanning or photographing a medical certificate and sending it electronically to Human Resources reduces their workload. Our interviewees were very interested in the idea of sending information to management in the form of videos instead of letters and memos, because that enables them to get their message across in a more authentic way that has greater emotional impact.

And how are things progressing with the internal projects?

Hötzel: We are working on a detailed concept that deals both with content and technical implementation. Of course, it has to be approved by management and then we will start implementing the first development phase. At any rate, our goal is to present a digital beacon to employees before the end of the year.

How do you see the Digital Unit in five years?

Hötzel: In five years’ time it should definitely not be a project any more. Our aim is for the T/D3sixty company to become a valuable part of the Felix Schoeller Group, adding value and generating revenue. Digital services, tools and platforms are a well-established and economically viable part of the Felix Schoeller Group.
The Company of the Future
Interview with Georg Haggenmüller

Georg Haggenmüller (49) is always able to make the right decisions. As chief manufacturing officer (CMO) and executive vice-president of the Felix Schoeller Group’s holding company, Haggenmüller, who originally trained as a papermaker and business administrator, is now responsible for ensuring that production runs smoothly and the machines work efficiently in all the mills. Although very attached to his native Allgäu, Haggenmüller has a global outlook. He now faces one of his greatest challenges: to take action today to future-proof the Felix Schoeller Group and its efficiency. The vehicle for doing that is the Company of the Future project, which will set the direction of travel for the Felix Schoeller Group by redefining structures, workflows and processes, and also individual jobs and activities in the production department, and making them fit for the future. Haggenmüller tackles this challenge with all his professional skills and decision-making capacity. He has thought through and structured his approach. He is supported by an experienced team.

What are your main responsibilities as chief manufacturing officer (CMO)?

Georg Haggenmüller: As CMO I am responsible for production in all our mills. That includes ensuring our long-term competitiveness, improving our position on the industry cost curve, optimising production units and making capacity available. Refining quality and our understanding of quality is also part of my job. As the Felix Schoeller Group grows, global networking and integration of our international sites is also an important issue. And, last but not least, I am also concerned with providing professional development for employees in the production departments, to ensure they are fit to tackle the challenges of the future.

How many sites are you responsible for?

Haggenmüller: Five in Germany, one in Canada and a converting facility in the US. I am also the first point of contact for anything to do with production in our joint ventures in Russia and in China. Integrating and connecting these overseas joint venture sites, in particular the production units in China, is currently my major challenge.

Has it been going well to date?

Haggenmüller: Yes it has. Amazingly well, actually. Our employees who are working there as expats are making an outstanding contribution to that.

Where is Felix Schoeller in the technology rankings?

Haggenmüller: We are in a good position technologically and we are blessed with a special feature: I know of no other paper company in Germany that has such a broad range of technology as ours and at the same time has such a diverse range of options. We have to develop these special features into a unique advantage so that we become outstanding in our ability to meet the demands of our customers – unbeatable in fact.

What lies behind the mega-project Company of the Future?

Haggenmüller: The Company of the Future project combines the need for technical improvements with the challenges of demographic change. It has a two-fold dimension. We are looking to improve the company’s cost structure by automating and optimising processes. At the same time, we would like to organise jobs and activities in such a way that they match the abilities and needs of existing and future employees – not just now but also in the future. Delivering training for employees and reducing the workload of individuals are key factors that will contribute to the project’s success.

Does that mean that this is a restructuring project?

Haggenmüller: No, it isn’t, even if the structures are going to change. Investment and organisational changes will be timed in such a way that the necessary staff reductions will be dealt with by people reaching retirement age. This means that there will be job cuts but they will be done in a socially responsible way and that all parties in the company will play an active role and support them.

How will work be different in the future?

Haggenmüller: We will be more focused, more concentrated and so will the work. Manual work and also psychological stress will be reduced. Our staff structures will be

DR ULPERT ROTT (1), RAINER HÖCKER (2), GEORG HAGGENMÜLLER (3), ANDREAS STEINHÜBEL (4)
adapted to the different way of working. We therefore talk about a combination of work processes being made easier, better and leaner. This is our way of responding to demographic developments and the future cost structure.

How have employees reacted?

Haggenmüller: Changes make many employees feel uncomfortable at first. In our experience, employees’ acceptance of a project increases if we get them on board, keep them informed and take their fears and concerns seriously. The fact that the chairs of the works councils in all the German mills are behind the project is also helpful.

Are you making progress?

Haggenmüller: We are making good progress. Provided we continue to implement the project successfully, there will be no need for redundancies.

Digitalisation will not just affect the production departments. What developments do you envisage for the mills?

Haggenmüller: Digitalisation in the production departments started a long time ago and is a work in progress. We have some shortcomings in the digital maturity of our processes, but we are now looking to address them with the Industry 4.0 project. We want to make what have become complex production processes easier to manage using digital assistance systems. Let me give you an example: to be able to produce a quality-compliant grade on a paper machine, hundreds of parameters and target specifications have to be set on the machine. This happens to some extent as a result of process and quality control systems (in other words digitally) but also by our employees making manual adjustments. After the initial settings are in place and during production, the settings have to be monitored and controlled, always with the goal of guaranteeing quality and productivity. This very complicated process is difficult to manage and requires a great deal of experience, which means that the desired outcome (quality and productivity) is not certain enough. Furthermore, this approach is so complex that we can no longer continue to develop in terms of quality and productivity. That is why we need assistance systems that digitally support the entire process and enable us to reproduce it reliably.

Do you have any specific examples of that yet?

Haggenmüller: Yes. Some years ago we began to install what are known as DAA systems on the paper machines and converting machines. These programs are networked with the machine, monitor the entire production process and compare the machine settings and also the quality data measured with previous production runs. The employee receives feedback in real time along with indications of the quality, and can intervene and change the machine settings if necessary. The DAA monitors, compares and displays deviations throughout the entire process, thus assisting the machine operators, giving them better information and making their job easier.

Why are you pursuing a policy of digitalisation in the production department?

Haggenmüller: Digitalisation in the production departments started a long time ago and is a work in progress. We have some shortcomings in the digital maturity of our processes, but we are now looking to address them with the Industry 4.0 project. We want to make what have become complex production processes easier to manage using digital assistance systems. Let me give you an example: to be able to produce a quality-compliant grade on a paper machine, hundreds of parameters and target specifications have to be set on the machine. This happens to some extent as a result of process and quality control systems (in other words digitally) but also by our employees making manual adjustments. After the initial settings are in place and during production, the settings have to be monitored and controlled, always with the goal of guaranteeing quality and productivity. This very complicated process is difficult to manage and requires a great deal of experience, which means that the desired outcome (quality and productivity) is not certain enough. Furthermore, this approach is so complex that we can no longer continue to develop in terms of quality and productivity. That is why we need assistance systems that digitally support the entire process and enable us to reproduce it reliably.

Is there a connection between OpEx Management and the Company of the Future project?

Haggenmüller: There most definitely is. In eliminating wastage and introducing support from assistance systems we are also designing the jobs of the future. This enables us to accommodate demographic change and other trends.
The exhibition of winning entries to the third Felix Schoeller Photo Award ended on 22 April 2018 with record visitor numbers. Over 10,000 photography enthusiasts had come to Osnabrück’s museum district to see the impressive work by the competition’s winners and nominees.

The city of Osnabrück was actively involved in the Felix Schoeller Photo Award for the first time, including organising numerous activities in connection with the exhibition. A successful press campaign was run throughout the entire exhibition – using posters, advertisements and flyers – resulting in regular publications in renowned magazines and on online platforms. As a result of these activities, visitor numbers in excess of 7,000 were recorded in the first two months. This prompted the museum’s director Nils-Arne Kässens to extend the exhibition by eight weeks until 22 April 2018. Over 10,000 photography enthusiasts poured into the Cultural History Museum in Osnabrück’s museum district.

“I would first of all like to thank the Felix Schoeller Group for the gift of this exhibition. When I heard about the project on starting my job here a year ago, I was instantly excited, because I, too, am an aspiring photographer. I could envisage the huge potential that photography holds. And I decided to exploit this potential for our museum, for the city of Osnabrück and, of course, for the award itself,” Kässens explained in an interview.

Held only three times so far, the Felix Schoeller Photo Award (FSPA) has already become an internationally renowned competition. Dr Bernhard Klofat, former CEO of the Felix Schoeller Group, commented on the result as follows: “The creativity, quality and quantity of the entries submitted testify to the fact that FSPA has now established itself in the global community of professional photographers. The numbers speak for themselves: we received 2,377 entries from 92 countries and shortlisted 187 entries from 34 countries. The six award winners come from six different countries, one of which is Germany. Since it was held for the first time in 2013, 4,250 photographers from over 100 countries have taken part in the Felix Schoeller Photo Award.

The five members of the expert jury also rated the quality of the work submitted as very high. Michael Dannenmann, chair of the jury, believes that it has become increasingly difficult to notice differences between the various nationalities. “The photographers and also their work and ways of seeing things are becoming increasingly similar. Unlike a few years ago, national differences are no longer relevant. Photography is a decidedly global affair.”

Launched in 2017: the People’s Choice

In 2017, close cooperation began with the world-renowned and oldest professional photography magazine – the British Journal of Photography, which was founded in 1854. The collaboration with this international media partner increased the Photo Award’s visibility in the global photography community enormously. The BJP’s activities on the social networks made a crucial contribution to this. The People’s Choice award, which was instigated by the BJP, received a huge response on the social networks. Marc Hartog, the owner and publisher of the BJP, described the benefits for all parties in figures: “The winner of the People’s Choice, Guilherme Bergamini, was featured in an extensive editorial on BJP online. We created coverage for this entry among our 250,000 website visitors, over 530,000 Facebook followers, 63,000 Instagram followers and 22,000 Twitter followers. So the photographer had a great deal of publicity for his work.”
Matt Hulse was able to win over the jury of this year’s Felix Schoeller Photo Award not once but twice: his work entitled Sniper not only won in the free choice/conceptual photography category; the British film-maker, photographer and writer also took the overall Gold Award with this piece of work. His description of his concept is extremely simple and concise: “In Asia I photograph people from the roofs of tall buildings. I use a cheap mobile phone and a telescopic lens costing US $9. I chose the title Sniper because of the unsettling, menacing feeling I had while shooting these photos.” Hulse has played around with the genres of photography and film since the end of the 1990s, experimenting and trying out new things. Many of his works have won awards at international festivals or been nominated.

**FREE CHOICE/CONCEPTUAL PHOTOGRAPHY**

**TITLE OF THE WORK:** SNIPER

**BY:** MATT HULSE

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**FOCUS ON**

All the nominated works as well as the concepts and biographies of the artists can be found at felix-schoeller-photoaward.com.

Further information about the Felix Schoeller Photo Award can be found on Facebook at facebook.com/felixschoellerphotoaward and on Instagram under felixschoellerphotoaward.
FOCUS

ON

the great Dutch landscape painters.

photos depict a menacing beauty, inspired by

climate change. I am very

confronted with the immediate future.

landscape painting. The connection to history

feels closely connected with classical Dutch

with his passion. His work has been exhibited

several times, but the Felix Schoeller Photo

Award is his first award. His piece Driveland

is inspired by US culture, which Brand first

became familiar with through films and books

but later through first-hand experience:

Drive-throughs are a common element in

consumer culture in the US. They come not

only in the shape of drive-through fast-food

outlets but also banks, drug stores, coffee

shops or post-office counters. Driveland

is about Brand wanting to record the particular

aesthetics of this US architecture.

Mario Brand is a Bielefeld-based photographer

who took a few detours before connecting

with his passion. His work has been exhibited

over 30 books on China, Persia, the Rena-

issance, Ancient Rome, gardens of Europe,

Thailand, Tuscany, Crete, Vietnam, Budapest,

Venice, abbeys of Europe, natural wonders of

Europe, etc. One of the reasons underlying

his decision to take part in the Felix Schoeller

Photo Award was that he realised that as

an analogue photographer – Schroeder was

born in 1955 – he had used Schoeller

photographic paper. He chose Living for

Death as his competition entry. It describes

the death rituals practiced by the Torajan

people of Indonesia. These rituals are com-

plicated and costly. When someone dies their

body is kept at home and treated as a friend

until the funeral.

Alan Schroeder is a Belgian photojournalist,

who founded the renowned Belgian photo

agency Reporters in 1989. He has illustrated

30 books on China, Persia, the Renais-

sance, Ancient Rome, gardens of Europe,

Thailand, Tuscany, Crete, Vietnam, Budapest,

Venice, abbeys of Europe, natural wonders of

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plicated and costly. When someone dies their

body is kept at home and treated as a friend

until the funeral.

Rodrigo Illescas was born in Bahia Blanca,

Buenos Aires, in 1983. He graduated as a

professional photographer from the Andy

Goldstein School of Creative Photography in

2013. In addition to his photographic work,

Illescas also writes poetry, explaining that the

two art forms inspire each other. Rodrigo

Illescas’ Are You There? takes us into the

depths of the human soul. After first viewing

the individual images, the way is open for

each person’s own projections and dreams.

Guilherme Bergamini was born 38 years ago in

Belo Horizonte in the Brazilian state of Minas

Gerais. He has been working as a photo-

grapher for 20 years and gained a degree in

photography ten years ago. Bergamini has a

tenacious and enquiring mind and uses his

photography to express political and social

criticism. One of his concerns is the Brazilian

education system. He himself was educated

in various private schools, a way of getting

a good education for those who can afford

it. The Brazilian government’s Education for

All programme has been able to get three

million children into school. However, only a

few were able to learn enough numeracy and

literacy skills to be able to have any chance on

the job market. Bergamini shows the collapse

of the education system. He documents the

decay of a school to illustrate this. The school

is in his home town of Belo Horizonte and had

previously been one of the best state schools

in the region. Its decay is a metaphor for the

condition of the Brazilian education system.

Hosam Katan was born in Aleppo, Syria, in

1994. He has been documenting the develop-

ment of the Syrian revolution since he was 17

years old. He works on a freelance basis for

Reuters and Stern magazine. Katan was shot

by a sniper, but survived and was able to flee

from Syria. He now lives in Hanover and is

studying at the university there. Hosam Katan

has already received awards in international

competitions, and his work has been on show

in a number of exhibitions in Europe and the

US. The Living with War series shows con-

tradictory, indeed conflicting, emotions and

experiences in the everyday lives of the in-

habitants of East Aleppo since the beginning

of the civil war. The photos show a great deal

of respect for the resilience and inventiven-

ess of the people of East Aleppo under the
dangerous circumstances they live in. The

photo series is intended not only to arouse

empathy; the photographer deliberately

provides a confrontation with issues such as

justice, responsibility and human dignity.
The Günzach mill has been part of the Felix Schoeller Group for 25 years
An important anniversary and an opportunity to celebrate its success

A special celebration took place on 30 April 2018: current and former employees brought their partners along to celebrate the fact that the Günzach mill has already been part of the Schoeller Group for 25 years. Some 390 guests gathered on a fine day in the Medeon events venue in Marktoberdorf, where CEO Hans-Christoph Gallenkamp welcomed them. I see this anniversary as one of the milestones in a success story that describes the unerring strategic orientation of the Schoeller Group towards diversification – which forced the company to broaden its field of business crystal clear: it had to be about specialty papers and have the potential to achieve a leading position in the new market. At the end of the 1980s, we carried out an extensive screening of all specialty paper segments. At the end of this process, one product area emerged: decor papers, explained Gallenkamp.

The first steps towards producing decor papers were taken in 1990 on what was then Technocell AG offered us a groundbreaking opportunity, giving us two decor paper mills: Pasing and Günzach. Each mill had two paper machines. As part of Project Allgäu we mothballed one of the paper machines in Pasing and moved the other to the Günzach mill where it is today’s PM14.

With the purchase of Technocell, the Schoeller Group’s decor paper business developed quickly. And the significance of the Technocell Division in our overall portfolio has continuously increased over recent years. In 2017, decor paper sales were 246,000 tonnes, two-thirds of the Schoeller Group’s total volume. Over 100 employees are employed in the Technocell mills, 226 of those at Günzach. This makes the Günzach mill an important and interesting employer in the region. In terms of number of machines – it operates three paper machines – Günzach is the largest and also the most flexible of all our production sites. The three machines make it possible to produce a wide variety of specialties, which are also successful in growth segments. They include pre-impregnated papers, intense coloured decor papers and nonwoven wallpapers. Gallenkamp highlighted Günzach’s unique ability within the group to offer small batch sizes from three tonnes upwards. Looking to the future, Gallenkamp underlined that Günzach is in a good position, provided the team there continue to embrace and actively shape any challenges that may arise. That includes the necessity to work on improving effectiveness and efficiency in order to ensure the future viability of the mill.

In conclusion, Gallenkamp talked about the good, trust-based collaboration with the works council and the many years of genuine social partnership in practice. This, he said, has made many achievements for the employees possible, such as Schoeller Plus, a subsidised pension scheme, the option to take out additional private health insurance or provision of funds for corporate health management activities. Detlef Weidlich, the mill manager, looked back over the mill’s history. Construction of the paper mill in Günzach began in 1923 – in the midst of the great inflation. The deciding factor in choosing this location was the huge demand for base paper to make parchment to supply the local milk and cheese market with packaging material. The site’s central location on the railway line between Kempton and Ronsberg was another factor in its favour, although it was 800 metres above sea level and not close to a river or other natural water source. Just one year after construction had begun, the first paper machine (today’s PM11) went into operation. Spurred on by its success, PM2 (today’s PM12) followed, being commissioned in 1927. Günzach continued to primarily produce and convert parchment base paper well into the 1960s, along with a number of specialty papers. The collapse came in 1967 with the arrival of plastics in the packaging industry: parchment was no longer in demand. The management of what was then Heinrich Nicolaus GmbH had to come up with something fast to keep the machines running. They decided to go for base paper for furniture, which meant entering a completely new market segment. The 1970s were a time of transformation, moving away from parchment paper and towards decor paper production. From 1977, Günzacher Papierfabrik’s production pro-
Among the group's most prominent figures is Markus Schaulin, production manager, who began his career at what was then Technocell Dekor AG in Günzach in 1992, straight after graduating with a degree in papermaking from Munich University. Stages on the way to becoming production manager included his many years as machine supervisor on PM11, his work on the team in Penza that got PM5 through to its successful start-up in 2009, and his work as a lean champion at the Günzach mill between 2012 and 2014. That job involved implementing the lean management philosophy at mill level. In 2014, he was given the opportunity to take over the post of production manager at the Günzach mill. In 2015 he then took part in an in-house Lean Six Sigma training course, gaining Green Belt certification. He cares very much about the Günzach mill and its success. He is convinced that the key factors in this success are not only making the right investments, but also having the right employees and managers in place.

Anna-Lena Rothermel, electrician in the maintenance team, started my mechatronic engineer training at Technocell in September 2014 and completed it in 2018. I am now working as an electrician in the maintenance department, and am currently in the induction phase. My job in the future will involve maintenance, but also rebuilding machines and working on a range of other projects. I have also been asked to be on call and work the later shift. Both of these things involve relying on yourself, which will be interesting and challenging. I enjoy working in Günzach because I enjoy the varied work and the fact that people get on well together and work as a team.

Christoph Herz, machine supervisor on PM14, started working at the Günzach mill as a trainee paper technologist in 2007. He was instantly fascinated by the complexity of the papermaking process and all its different facets. After completing his training, he went on to do a degree in paper engineering with the support of Technocell Dekor. His present job as machine supervisor on PM14 allows him to play an active part in the ongoing process of improving the Günzach production site. The broad range of requirements that PM14 has to fulfil means that his work is always varied and interesting.

Weidlich pointed out that the present capacity of 55,000 tonnes is the result of sustained investment in the mill. His experience tells him that the acquisition by the Felix Schoeller Group 25 years ago was a stroke of good fortune for Günzach and all its employees. Weidlich concluded his speech by stressing how proud he is to be a Schoelleranian.

The town’s mayor, Wilma Hofer, did not want to miss the opportunity to speak to the company’s employees on the occasion of this special anniversary. She stressed in her speech that the paper mill has a good name as an important employer in the town and in the region. Furthermore, the cooperation between the local authority and the company has always been harmonious and based on great trust over the years. That has been demonstrated by numerous projects and approval procedures. The mayor said how happy she was that the Günzach mill played such an important role within the Felix Schoeller Group and wished everyone continued success for the future.

The programme was dominated by decor papers. The Günzach mill came to the attention of the MD group from Munich-Dachau, who went on to purchase it with a view to expanding their decor paper activities. In the mid-1980s, the MD group hived off the Günzach and Pasing mills and incorporated them into the newly established Technocell AG, which also included pulp operations. Unfortunately, their aim to produce pulp was not attainable, and Technocell AG was forced into insolvency in 1993. In November 1993, the Felix Schoeller Group won its takeover bid for the two decor paper mills.

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RAINER UNGLERT
Paper machine operator on PM11

I began working as 2nd paper machine assistant (formerly called press operator) at the MD paper mill in Günzach in October 1984. I had a number of jobs after that, including pulper operator, 1st paper machine assistant and then HKA pulper operator. I have now been a paper machine operator on PM11 for many years. The switch to small batches is a challenging task. I enjoy working at Felix Schoeller because it offers a safe working environment and a fairly secure job.

FLORIAN HINDELANG
Lean champion

I started my training as a mechatronic engineer at TCG in September 2001. I then went on to work as a 2nd paper machine assistant on PM14. I trained as a paper technologist from 2005 to 2006. I also changed jobs in 2005, remaining on the shop floor but working as 1st assistant on PM12. From 2010 to 2012, I studied privately and gained state-recognised qualifications as a mechatronic engineer. I have been working at Schoeller Technocell in Günzach again since 2012. I was responsible for QA systems until the end of 2016. In 2017, I became a lean champion in Günzach. My work with lean management enables me to participate directly in redesigning and optimising our production processes, and processes in ancillary areas, based on insights gained and the wishes of the individual departments. Colleagues and managers across all the Technocell sites are friendly and helpful. The company also offers a great deal of scope for employees to carry out their day-to-day work. Communicating with the individual departments and external companies is a very important part of my job. Proposed process improvements and changes to measurements have to be compiled and examined to see if they can be implemented. This relies on having a strong team in the technical and production departments that is completely reliable and able to put proposed smaller-scale solutions into practice very quickly.

VERONIKA STRAUB
Laboratory assistant

I have been working in Günzach since September 2004. My tasks include checking incoming raw materials, control of inspection, measuring and test equipment, and testing papers. I enjoy working in Günzach because my boss trusts me, which means that I can organise my work as I like and do not have someone looking over my shoulder all the time. My work is varied and I am also sent into other departments. There are good training and professional development opportunities. The company is committed to the health and safety of its employees — both in theory and in practice. I can take my annual leave when I need to; and my wages are always paid on time. I don’t have to travel too far to work and I get on well with many of my colleagues.

CHRISTOPH GRABOWSKI
Production planning on PM14

I began my training as a papermaker at Technocell Dekor in Günzach on 5 September 1998 and completed it in the summer of 2001. I worked for about two years as 2nd assistant on PM14, then as 1st assistant and subsequently as a machine operator and floater. In 2006, I attended a papermakers’ school in Steyermühl. From 2008, I worked as a floating foreman, PM floater, and later as a shift foreman. Since 2014, I have been back in production planning on PM14, and as deputy supervisor on PM14, I like working in Günzach because I have had a number of jobs with a very varied range of tasks over the years, because there are good opportunities for continuous professional development, and because the people who work here are supportive of each other; some of my colleagues have also become friends. I have been able to acquire a great deal of experience in producing decor papers and nonwoven wallpapers and in the ongoing phase of commissioning PM14. Since we are set to expand our portfolio still further in the future, there is no chance of the work becoming boring. The company cares about the health of its employees and offers a wide range of programmes. Also, the pay is attractive.

WOLFGANG RÖSLER
Former chair of the works council (until April 2018)

I started out in the logistics department of 4P Nicholas in May 1976 and began my papermaking training in September of the same year. After completing my training I worked for a short time in finishing, then as a shift lab assistant/presser and later as a dyer operator on PM11 and PM12. After gaining master craftsman qualifications, I began working as a foreman, first on PM12 and then on PM14. I was chair of the works council at our mill from May 2010 to April 2018. This job was very varied but not always easy. Dealing with the needs and interests of each of the employees and the employer is quite a feat. The good collaboration in the Günzach works council and the Felix Schoeller Group’s general works council, combined with the company’s high social standards, are the reasons I enjoy working at Schoeller Technocell. I am very concerned about how fast the workload for employees is becoming more onerous. It is important to remember that a company’s greatest asset is its workforce. The Günzach mill went through a number of sell-offs, changes in name and legal status, and even bankruptcy, so it was very fortunate that we were taken over by the Felix Schoeller Group 25 years ago.

SEBASTIAN HÄRING
Electrician in the maintenance department

After completing my training as an electronics engineer for energy systems, I transferred to Technocell in 2001. Since then I have been working as an electrician in the maintenance department. I enjoy the varied work as an electrician and also the challenges, for instance following a rebuild. But what is completely unbeatable is the team spirit in our electronics and electrical workshop.

In view of the shortages of skilled workers so often discussed, I believe it is important for us to be an attractive employer for well-trained and qualified staff — especially those who have been trained within the company. This is true both for the production and the maintenance departments. This is the only way we will be able to maintain our quality standards and meet specifications, which in turn will help us to further consolidate our position in the world market.
Focus

Felix Schoeller India
On-site converting brings us closer to our customers

We finally got there: after long negotiations the Felix Schoeller India joint venture was established in October. It combines the activities of the Felix Schoeller Group with those of our long-standing partner New (India) Imaging Industries and creates a converting and distribution platform for digital media papers in India.

NII, New (India) Imaging Industries, and the Felix Schoeller Group have known each other for a long time. Their business relationship is based on mutual trust. NII already operates a converting facility for digital print media in India, which is scheduled to be expanded and modernised in the coming months. A new ultra-modern converting centre will be built in Navi Mumbai and will be partly equipped with German machines. The joint venture’s range of products is tailored to the needs of the Indian market. It includes photo papers, sublimation papers, nonwoven wallpapers and solvent and latex printable papers.

The benefits for the customer are obvious: the supply chain will become much shorter and Felix Schoeller India will be more flexible as a supplier. Because whereas today it is mainly finished products that are transported from Germany to India, in future the paper will be transported as jumbo rolls and converted in India. The result: the product is tailored to the customers’ needs, finished to their specifications and warehoused locally so that it is available at short notice.

Alameda
New converting capacity in California

On 1 October this year the Felix Schoeller Group took over Alameda Company in California. This acquisition is a further step along the Group’s growth path.

Alameda Company is a leader in converting digital printing materials, which are sold predominantly in the southwest of the US. Its portfolio focuses mainly on papers for large-format printing and proofing products. The acquisition of Alameda strengthens Felix Schoeller’s position in North America because the two companies complement each other perfectly. Michael Sizadet, president of Felix Schoeller North America, sees Alameda as being about more than increasing capacity. We can now offer the market comprehensive product solutions for digital printing media, he comments.