



WORLD WIDE WEAVE

A shining example of leading technology and innovation

GKD: Federal Minister Wanka visits Düren

With its outstanding solutions for industry and architecture, the medium-sized technical weaver GKD – Gebr. Kufferath AG (GKD), which is now in its third generation of private ownership, is the world market leader. The secret to this success are wire mesh structures that make a contribution toward meeting global needs in the areas of water, nutrition, mobility, health, climate protection and the conservation of resources. Thanks to an agile culture of innovation, GKD has turned the traditional art of weaving into a key technology for numerous industries. The company is also pressing on with the digitalization of business processes in order to strengthen its current leading position through matched, innovative product/service systems and a sophisticated global multiplatform strategy. This was sufficient grounds for Prof. Dr. Johanna Wanka, Federal Minister of Education and Research, to visit this model example of a high-performing German SME. Together with her Parliamentary State Secretary Thomas Rachel, she gathered information on the company's latest research activities and its pioneering production environment.

Whether filters in mechanical process engineering, process belts in key industrial applications or woven systems for optimizing buildings: the expertise and range of products and services of GKD are truly unparalleled. With this variety of competencies, the technical weaver has secured a world-leading market position in numerous demanding niche markets. Since its foundation in 1925, the company has specifically targeted growth markets that shape all areas of society and business. One example of this is the broad field of water processing, where high-tech mesh from GKD sets



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standards worldwide in the treatment of drinking and waste water. Its focus on ballast water in shipping or on systems for reducing the quantity of microplastics deposited in oceans also highlights the company's expertise in sustainable developments. As a project partner in the *Research for Sustainable Development (FONA)* program supported by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research, GKD works with the Technical University of Berlin and other renowned partners on a wide range of research projects. The goal of the latest project Tire debris in the environment (RAU) is to develop systems that prevent tire debris from entering the sewers.

Fast market maturity

This ability to quickly transform knowledge gained from R&D projects into successful, marketable products is illustrated by a current example from the USA. Together with leading oil and gas exploration companies, GKD researched ways to reduce erosion in pipelines. Here, the mesh specialist proved the connection between abrasion and feed pressure through a comprehensive range of CFD models showing flow paths and pore velocity distributions. GKD used these findings to develop the innovative Porometric mesh, which is at least twice as permeable as conventional meshes while offering the same separation rate thanks to a porosity of more than 70 percent. For this product development, in 2017 the company claimed the renowned AFS Award for the second time in three years for the world's best product innovation in the field of filtration.

Insight into R&D activities

Moreover, GKD is working intensively on mesh solutions for alternative drive technologies in the automotive industry. Whether battery or fuel cell, the technology leader for industrial mesh presented its latest findings at the International Motor Show (IAA) in Frankfurt. The latest R&D developments of



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the dynamic medium-sized enterprise were also on the agenda for the visit of Federal Minister Johanna Wanka and Parliamentary State Secretary Thomas Rachel to the GKD headquarters in Düren, Germany. They were particularly interested in the state-of-the-art production environment with special weaving machines, cleanroom technology, simulation and the already highly advanced digitalization of all business processes.

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The owner-run technical weaver GKD – Gebr. Kufferath AG is the global market leader for metal and plastic woven solutions as well as spiral fabrics. Four independent business divisions bundle their expertise under one roof: Industrial Mesh (woven metal mesh and filter solutions), Process Belts (belts made of mesh and spirals), Metalfabrics (façades, safety and interior design made of metal fabrics) and Mediamesh® (transparent media façades). With its headquarter in Germany and five other facilities in the US, South Africa, China, India and Chile – as well as its branches in France, Great Britain, Spain, Dubai, Qatar and worldwide representatives, GKD is close to markets anywhere in the world.

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