



Press Release

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Exemplary innovation processes at Krüss GmbH Wissenschaftliche Laborgeräte

Krüss GmbH Wissenschaftliche Laborgeräte has won the "Innovative Processes and Organisation" award in the TOP 100 competition held to find the most innovative medium-sized firms in Germany. Because the company systematically covers all stages of the innovation process, it can exploit its resources to the full, thus safeguarding product and process innovations over the long term. These advantages helped it secure first place in this category. In addition, the company won the TOP 100 seal of approval for its outstanding achievements in the field of innovation. Every year, Nikolaus Franke, professor of entrepreneurship and innovation at the Vienna University of Economics and Business Administration, investigates the innovative capabilities of medium-sized companies and selects the hundred best ones. Project patron Lothar Späth will be presenting the prize and this highly coveted award to the firm's managing director, Alexander Bünz, in Berlin on June 22nd 2005.

The company's victory in the "Innovative Processes and Organisation" category is due to its well-structured processes, which facilitate innovation over the long term. Krüss systematically supports all stages of the process in exemplary fashion; this involves generating new ideas and constantly evaluating them, launching new products and services on the market, and thoroughly analysing the company's innovation performance. However, its systematic approach also allows for flashes of creative inspiration. According to Professor Franke, who coordinates the TOP 100 survey, two further factors enable the company to maximise its potential. First, a fairly high proportion of its 45 employees (20%) are engaged in research and development. And second, it derives additional valuable input from well-organised joint development projects with universities and research institutes, which offer the unusual benefit of profit-sharing schemes.

Key customers generally support the development process from beginning to end, and design offices are integrated into the innovation process at an early stage of development. All of these factors have enabled the company to establish itself as a technology leader in its industry.

Krüss GmbH Wissenschaftliche Laborgeräte develops processes and measuring instruments which are used in the tenside industry, for example, to optimise the



cleaning properties of detergents. A potentially new market for Krüss is electronics manufacturers looking to improve their TFT monitors. But photography also offers potential applications. A new generation of cameras will eventually no longer use rigid lenses made from glass; instead, they will feature newly developed liquid lenses that can contract and expand in response to an electric field. This is another area where Krüss' equipment is being used. At any rate, managing director Alexander Bünz is confident about the company's prospects: "You'll find us wherever the development of process-enabled measuring instruments is responding to trends in scientific research."

Every year, Professor Franke uses a standardised procedure to establish the hundred most innovative participants in the TOP 100 study. Out of roughly 1,750 companies from all over Germany that registered an interest, 192 ultimately took up the challenge. Find out which of them made the exclusive TOP 100 shortlist at www.top100.de and in the book accompanying this project.

The next TOP 100 project starts in the middle of September and the closing date for entries is 30 November. Companies interested in participating can apply now for a free information pack by contacting compamedia GmbH at info@compamedia.de.

Project patron, partners and coordination

The project's patron is Lothar Späth. Partners in the project are Arthur D. Little, the Geffroy Business Akademie, the German Centre for Productivity and Innovation (RKW), the Association for Electrical, Electronic & Information Technologies (VDE), and the Association of German Engineers (VDI). The media partner is the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* newspaper. The project is coordinated by Professor Nikolaus Franke of the Vienna University of Economics and Business Administration.

Organiser: compamedia GmbH

compamedia specialises in organising benchmarking projects for German medium-sized firms and in building networks of such companies. It runs the "TOP 100 - Germany's most innovative medium-sized businesses" project as well as the employers' benchmarking award "TOP JOB – Germany's best SME employers". Its latest project is "ETHICS IN BUSINESS – pioneers of ethical conduct".

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This text is available in digital format from masurat@compamedia.de; photographs of the awards ceremony will be available in the "Press" section of www.top100.de from Thursday, 23 June.