

GÜDE BOLSTERS MANUFACTURING CAPABILITIES

Family business **Güde** is expanding production to help boost availability for its worldwide customers. *Torque Magazine* speaks with CEO **Lutz Güde**...



Güde's new 1,400 m² plant in Poland uses the same raw materials, quality system and IT links as the manufacturer's HQ in Germany

Washer manufacturer Güde is an A1 supplier in the fastener industry, producing safety washers, wire bended parts as well as screw and spindle fastening devices on self-made machines and toolings.

Headquartered in Plettenberg, the 100% family-owned business is now in its third generation with CEO Lutz Güde and currently sees a turnover in the region of €24 million and 2.7 billion pieces sold, shipping up to 140 pallets of products to customers every day.

Key customers are the mayor distributors with the some key markets rail and energy. With its spring washers, locking washers and PAL nuts well suited to those and further sectors.

Over the decades, Güde's development has seen it move to its current Plettenberg location in the 1990s, while other notable expansions have included a particularly fertile period between 2012 and 2018, when it grew 60% in terms of location size.

One of Güde's most recent expansions/developments has seen it bolster its manufacturing capacity further with the construction of a new production plant in Poland.

The new plant is over 1,400 m² and Güde is aiming to have eight employees there by the end of the year.

Güde CEO Lutz Güde explains to *Torque Magazine*: "There are several reasons behind the decision to build the new plant in Poland, such as capacity in terms of space and machine output. We are investing in completely new machinery to enlarge our capacity; we are not shifting machines from our HQ to Güde Polska.

"Other reasons as the skilled labour shortage, costs for energy and the perfect infrastructure of Poland made us the step. One Polish employee who used to work for us took the decision to take the lead of the new plant – that was like a win in the lottery!"

For the time being, the Polish plant will produce standard products for Güde: "No drawing parts or special parts for customers... yet."

IT & LEAN LOGISTICS

As the manufacturing sector has modernised, the emphasis on IT systems has got ever greater and that's certainly the case at Güde. From initial barcode solutions to boost reliability and accuracy in all processes to EDI being a mainstay at Güde for well over a decade and – more recently – extensive programmes for the digital workplace and increasing lean logistics.

Sophisticated IT systems also come into play with the new Polish plant. Crucially, the new facility's IT system links directly to Güde's servers in Plettenberg, meaning the PDA and the CAQ system are online with HQ. It means the checks and demands for quality are the same, whether in Germany or Poland.

// We are building stocks and raising availability levels for our worldwide customers. //

The Güde CEO believes the new plant will satisfy the firm's needs for the coming years. Ultimately, the expansion has been made to satisfy customers, as he explains: "Our customers demand from us short delivery times and perfect service. Due to the rising demand and the many turbulences the market faced the past two years the supply of raw materials was not too steady.

"We are aiming to build up more stock and raise availability for our worldwide customers. In terms of quality, we are dealing with the same raw material in Poland as we are Germany – also the same machinery and the same quality system as in our plant in Plettenberg."

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