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Innovative Niedersachsen

ISSUE# 2 | 2008
Magazine for Business
and Technology



Designing Future

Niedersachsen's Potential in Biotechnology

INNOVATION

Automotive and other sectors heading
for international competitiveness

ENERGY

Achieving unique competence in energy
supply and wind energy

EXHIBITIONS

Global technology meetings in
Niedersachsen's capital Hannover



Niedersachsen

Whatever your plans may be.





Editorial

"We welcome forward-looking companies and qualified personnel to join and become a part of innovative Niedersachsen."

Christian Wulff, Minister President of Niedersachsen

Dear Reader,

In times of rapid progress and global competition it is our goal for Niedersachsen to continue to extend its position of leadership in technology. We want to keep pace with the international tempo.

New products, production techniques and services ensure companies' ongoing competitiveness and their being ready to take on future challenges. These challenges have to be jointly met by companies and politicians. We believe that to achieve this goal is a task for the whole of society. A good example for a tool working to this end has been set by the recently created Niedersachsen Fund for Innovation. Being open to private contributions, the Fund goes beyond the limits of state support for innovation.

In order to portray our policy and our activities, we have launched the, by now award-winning, "Innovative Niedersachsen" campaign. Cinema spots and large-format advertisements present Niedersachsen as a successful, innovative state. We welcome forward-looking companies and qualified personnel to join and become a part of innovative Niedersachsen. We also trust that the campaign will create more openness for new technologies.

Innovation is important in order to be competitive today and to remain so in the future; our presence on the international markets is just as important. Today, our companies increasingly act within global value chains. This creates new opportunities for our companies.

To promote global business contacts, we will continue to expand our network of agencies. In addition, we are planning to found later this year NGlobal, a company that besides promoting exports will also focus on the setting up of new companies as well as on advertising our location.

I hope you enjoy reading our magazine on innovative Niedersachsen and that you find it both informative and inspiring.

Christian Wulff

Minister President of Niedersachsen

Innovative Niedersachsen

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Photo: Meyer Werft



Photo: Meyer Werft



Innovation

Shipyard Meyer Werft in Papenburg as well as the wind energy sector stand for Niedersachsen's competitiveness on international markets. Multinationals, family owned businesses and successfully acting industrial start-ups are heading for innovations to keep pace with global challenges. The federal state of Niedersachsen is aware of its future potential.

Energy

By its know-how and long-time experience in the technology of renewable energy Niedersachsen has become an innovation leader in the sector. Not only in Germany, but also on foreign markets. The fast growing sector of wind energy is contributing to develop Niedersachsen's position as a stimulus for future energy supply in Europe.





Competitiveness

Volkswagen is by far the most important company in Niedersachsen. With 329,000 employees worldwide Volkswagen is heading for global leadership in innovation, competitiveness and eco-friendliness. CEO Dr. Martin Winterkorn explains how Volkswagen wants to become "the world's most fascinating car maker."



Photos: Volkswagen AG



Biotechnology

From producing new drugs to modifying plants to developing innovative technologies – Niedersachsen is one of the most important biotechnology regions in Germany. 170 companies work in that sector, and their annual growth in employees as well as turnover is above-average. The world meeting of BIOTECHNICA show in Hannover is strengthening the ties of the young industries to global markets.



Photos: Sartorius

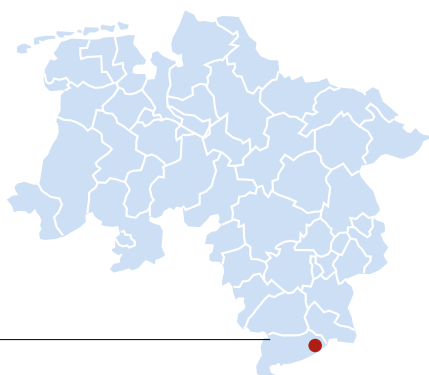
Fantastic Games!

At the Paralympics in Beijing, the Niedersachsen healthcare company Otto Bock has been responsible for maintenance and repair of the wheelchairs, prostheses and orthoses of the 4,000 athletes from all over the world.



"Together with my employees, I was impressed by the great performances of the athletes, and as well of the perfect organization of the event."

Prof. Hans Georg Näder,
Managing partner, Otto Bock



Text: Andreas Breyer

"We in Germany are known for our good organizational skills, but what you got off the ground here is even more impressive." With this statement, Professor Hans Georg Näder, managing partner of the German based healthcare company Otto Bock, praised the perfect organisation of the 2008 paralympics.

And he ought to know: The company has attended all summer and winter Paralympics since the 1988 games in Seoul. Since then, volume and complexity of the technical support of the paralympic sport has continuously been risen. What started out 20 years ago as a small operation with four technicians, has developed into a large-scale logistics project during the Games in Beijing. As an exclusive service provider, the medical technology company took over the repair services for prostheses and wheelchairs at the Paralympics from September 6 to 17, 2008; and therewith assisted sportsmen and women to deliver highest performances at the Beijing games.

International Team of Specialists

The multicultural team of technicians consisted of 86 women and men dispatched by 19 international Otto Bock subsidiaries. Furthermore, for the first time, 50 prosthetists from the host country were part of the team. In a series of intensive courses, Otto Bock has trained them in sports-specific technical challenges. The total assignment of 136 technicians, located in the central Otto Bock repair shop and directly at 13 competition sites, meant a new record. A significant portion of the work-

shop equipment, parts, and materials had been sent to Beijing by ship from Germany three months prior to the games. The first group of Otto Bock technicians arrived in China's capital at the end of August. These early preparations enabled athletes to have their equipment checked before their events.



Prostheses, orthoses, and wheelchairs are put under extreme strain during high-performance sports..

There is good reason for such a service: Prostheses, orthoses, and wheelchairs are put under extreme strain, when athletes with disabilities participate in high-performance sports. Therefore, demands are high to the mechanical skills of the experts, in particular when it comes to extremely bonded pieces of sports equipment. Re-

pairs were frequently required at the Paralympics and sometimes even directly on the competition site.

Experience has shown that athletes from developing countries, where technical support for orthopaedic equipment is still behind the times, are especially eager to take advantage of the service during the Games. One of the orthopedic masterpieces was the manufacturing of a total new thigh prostheses for the only participant from Madagascar, within less than 24 hours. His old model had been damaged irreparably. In total, 2.161 manufacturing and repair orders have been carried out by the technicians during the Paralympics in Beijing.

Partnership Renewed

Even during the 13th Paralympics in Beijing, the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) and Otto Bock HealthCare have extended their present cooperation until the year 2012, with the new contract covering the Paralympics 2010 in Vancouver and 2012 in London. Says Prof. Näder: "Within the scope of the Paralympics, we have prolonged our partnership with the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) up to and including the year 2012; and I am already looking forward to the Games 2010 in Vancouver and 2012 in London".

"Wonderful 20 years of support of the Paralympics by Otto Bock"

Sir Philip Craven, IPC president, talked about "wonderful 20 years of support of the Paralympics by Otto Bock." He advised to be careful with the word partnership, but: "Real partnership is something we experience with Otto Bock."

All Expectations Fulfilled

Otto Bock expected fair and rousing top-level sports during the 2008 Paralympics in China, from athletes who, by delivering



Photo: Otto Bock

Even during the games, the contract for the future partnership between Otto Bock and the IPC has been signed.

peak performances, would have a positive effect on the way that the world views the life of persons with handicaps.

These wishes came true, as the resume of Professor Hans Georg Näder, managing partner of the Otto Bock Group, proves: „The Paralympics 2008 in Beijing have been fantastic, highly emotional games. Together with my employees, I was impressed by the great performances of the athletes, and as well of the perfect organization of the event. We are proud that once more we were given the chance to demonstrate our competence."

www.ottobock.de



Photo: flickr

Excellent with Enzymes

From producing new drugs to modifying plants to developing innovative technologies
– Niedersachsen is one of the most important biotechnology regions in Germany.

Text: Julia Koch

170 companies work in that sector, and their annual growth in employees as well as turnover is above-average. "Biotechnology is one of our state's strengths", says Niedersachsen's Minister of Economics Walter Hirche. "We are aware of the potential that lies there."

To support the biotechnology and life sciences industry, the Ministry of Economics established the Life Science Network Niedersachsen, known as BioRegionN, in the mid-1990s. It serves as a platform to connect business, science and politics and helps companies gain access to funds. The network's Life Science Report 2008, based on a survey among Niedersachsen's 260 life science companies which include pharmaceutical, chemical and medical technology besides biotechnology, shows that the industry is growing fast: Among the small and medium-sized businesses turnover increased by 33 percent and the number of employees by 10 percent in 2007.

Typically for the industry, most of the companies are small, employing 25 people on average.

On average, twelve new life science companies were started in Niedersachsen every year in the past decade. "We have a healthy mixture of numerous young companies, particularly in the city triangle Hanover-Göttingen-Braunschweig, be-



sides growing and well-established companies like Sartorius, Werum and Solvay Pharma", says BioRegionN spokesman Dr. Albrecht Läufer.

One of them is Vibalogics GmbH in Cuxhaven. Its 18 employees produce vaccines and medicines with living organisms like viruses and bacteria for pharmaceutical companies. "Since these organisms are augmentable and potentially dangerous for people and environment, there are high safety demands for manufacturing them", explains Managing Director Dr. Stefan Beyer. "For example, we work with a virus that is modified to destroy cancer cells. It is highly toxic for poultry, so if it was

"Business and science can achieve maximum performance only through cooperation. We are on a good way to turn excellent research results into economic success."

Walter Hirche, Niedersachsen's
Minister of Economics

accidentally released onto a chicken farm that would be disastrous." The employees have to pass through several gowning areas where they have to change clothes and are wholly covered before they enter the laboratory. Not even the air is allowed to leave that room unfiltered. The vaccines

failure three to five years in advance. That means a disease can be treated at an early stage when the organs are not yet damaged." That is possible because an approaching illness causes body proteins to change. Mosaiques analyses the changed protein pattern from an urine sample. It



Photo: Sartorius

Vibalogs produces are next tested on humans. In the last two years, the company's turnover increased by 13 and 15 percent, respectively.

Another small but successful company is mosaiques diagnostics and therapeutics AG, a spin-off of the Hannover Medical School. Set up in 2002 in Hannover, it is specialized on the early detection of diseases. The scientists have developed a technology by which it is possible to foretell a range of diseases at a stage when doctors are not yet able to diagnose them. "We know of the heart attack one and half years before it occurs", says CEO Joachim Conrads proudly. "We detect the kidney

can detect prostate cancer, cardiovascular diseases, chronic renal diseases, diabetic kidney failure and bladder cancer. More is to come. "In five years we want to be able to discover 50 diseases", says Conrads. His sales expectancy is "probably exorbitant." But there are also several big companies in Niedersachsen working with biotechnology. The seed company KWS SAAT AG from Einbeck with a turnover of 585 million EUR belongs to the top five international plant breeding companies. It is even world market leader regarding sugar beets seeds. Operative in 70 countries, more than 75 percent of the turnover is made outside Germany. It started working with



Photo: Sartorius



Photo: Sartorius

Sartorius AG, headquartered in Göttingen, is an internationally leading laboratory and process technology provider.



Photo: Sartorius

biotechnology in 1972. For example, tissue cultures are used to propagate plants so that one gets identical material for test crossings. "Scions in the Petri dish", as Dr. Reinhard Nehls puts it, Scientific Director of PLANTA Angewandte Pflanzengenetik und Biotechnologie GmbH, the subsidiary company of KWS in charge of its biotechnological activities. They also take the DNA of plants and analyse their characteristics, for example to see if a plant is resistant against a particular virus. "Without those molecular diagnostics we would have to do extensive cultivation tests under various conditions to find that out", explains Nehls. Shifting some of the research into the laboratory means getting quicker, more efficient and more accurate results. "We replace trial and error with targeted analyses."

Successful suppliers of biotechnological tools and equipment are also located in Niedersachsen and profit from the industry's growth. Sartorius AG, headquartered in Göttingen, is an internationally leading laboratory and process technology provider. With the take-over of the French company Stedim it set up Sartorius Stedim Biotech that focuses on biopharmaceutical equipment. Sartorius Stedim Biotech employs 2,300 people and had a pro forma sales revenue of 375.9 million EUR in 2007. Also located in Göttingen, IBA GmbH provides tools and technologies for life sci-

ence research. Started in 2000, it doubled the number of employees in the past two years and achieved a sales growth in the two-digit range.

Niedersachsen's greatest strength lies in pharmaceutical biotechnology with focus on neurobiology, stem cell biology and infection biology.

The number of substances in clinical trial has partly more than doubled in 2008. A particular success is that already two biopharmaceuticals have come on the market that have been completely developed in Niedersachsen. Both are products of Curatis Pharma GmbH in Hanover. Haemopressin is used to stop esophagus variceal bleeding in patients suffering from hepatitis and liver cirrhosis. Curatis sells it in several European and Asian countries, being in some of them the first with that active ingredient, and awaits approval for the USA. Cortirel is used to diagnose the cause of pituitary-adrenal problems. The company has only five employees who concentrate on research and development and outsource production and distribution. "We are a



small team, but we have provided a lot of jobs at other companies", says CEO Prof. Dr. Klaus-Dieter Döhler. Since the introduction of Haemopressin in 2001 the company has an annual increase in turnover of 20 to 30 per cent.

Niedersachsen's success in pharmaceutical biotechnology is mainly due to the numerous scientific institutions. A high level of networking has led to several joint projects. The Helmholtz Centre for Infection Research in Braunschweig (HZI) and the Hanover Medical School (MHH) have founded a Centre for Experimental and Clinical Infection Research called Twincore.



Photo: Sartorius

Successful suppliers of biotechnological tools and equipment are also located in Niedersachsen and profit from the industry's growth.

The centre combines the basic research at the HZI with the expertise at the MHH in clinical infection research. It started work in August 2008. One of the goals is to find new ways to treat hepatitis C. „The pre-clinical and clinical development of a new medicine is a highly complex, costly and long process. One cannot do it on one's own“, says head of the department Prof. Thomas Pietschmann. „At Twincore we profit hugely from the connection and close cooperation to the HZI and MHH.“

Seven scientific institutions established the excellence cluster for Regenerative Biology and Reconstructive Therapy, short Rebirth, that marks an important step in stem cell research. The partners work together on new therapies for blood, heart, liver and lung diseases. Biomedical disciplines are combined with chemistry, mechanics, and physics, including photonics. The German Research Foundation supports the cluster with 42 million EUR till 2011.

Biotechnology: Biotechnology means using biological processes or organisms such as bacteria and enzymes for industrial products or processes. One of the earliest forms of biotechnology was the making of bread, wine and beer with the help of yeast. Today, it is used in a range of industries including health care (red biotechnology), agriculture (green biotechnology) and industrial processes (white biotechnology). It combines disciplines like genetics, molecular biology, biochemistry, embryology and cell biology.

Furthermore, a small neuroscience hub has developed in the city of Göttingen with the Bernstein Center for Computational Neuroscience and the European Neuroscience Institute, a joint project between the University of Göttingen Medical School and two Max Planck Institutes (MPI for Biophysical Chemistry and MPI for Experimental Medicine).

Public funding also helped to strengthen the industry. Niedersachsen finances innovative projects through its innovation promotion and the new Future and Innovation Foundation Niedersachsen. The foundation's capital will increase to 100 million EUR in the next few years. Besides, the Hanover-Göttingen-Braunschweig triangle has become one of three model regions for biotechnology in Germany, receiving funding of up to 15 million EUR from the Federal Ministry of Education and Research. 29 projects focusing on neurobiology, stem cell biology, infection biology and platform technologies were financed so far.

A lot of those projects and cooperations are meant to pave the way for the latest research results to be put into practical application. „Business and science can achieve maximum performance only through close cooperation“, says Minister of Economics Walter Hirche. „We are on a good way in Niedersachsen to turn excellent research results into economic success.“



Annual World Event

BIOTECHNICA, Europe's leading biotechnology show is now being relaunched as an annual event. This will raise new business opportunities in Niedersachsen's capital Hanover.



Europe's biggest biotechnology trade fair takes place in Hanover: Biotechnica attracted 863 exhibitors and 13,000 visitors last year.

Text: Julia Koch, photos: Deutsche Messe

Europe's biggest biotechnology trade fair takes place in Hanover: Biotechnica attracted 863 exhibitors and 13,000 visitors last year. 32 countries were represented. Its four-part concept features an exhibition showcase, international conferences, a partnering event and the European Biotechnica Award. Responding to the growing demand of the industry, the organisers moved the event on an annual timeslot in 2007. In addition, a series of changes were introduced to make the trade fair still more attractive. The conference program was extended to also include policy issues (BioPolitics) beside scientific aspects (BioScience) and business development (BioBusiness). This year more than 400 experts from across the world reported on trends, research findings and the latest practical applications.

Another addition was the forum "Science to Market", organized by the European Association of Pharma Biotechnology (EAPB), which provides a separate meeting-place for pharmaceutical biotechnol-

ogy. Biotechnica also features a match-making platform that is open to all participants. It is meant to facilitate business deals and contacts to ensure that good ideas find the right business partners. One of the highlights of the three day event is the presentation of the European Biotechnica Award to the most innovative company. The award from Deutsche Messe AG is currently worth 100,000 Euros.

Deutsche Messe AG exported Biotechnica successfully abroad: For the biotechnology industry in Asia, it established the Biotech China in Shanghai that was held for the second time this year. With 5,179 trade visitors from 29 countries and a high proportion of foreign exhibitors the organisers rated it a success. This year also saw the debut of Biotechnica America with INTER-PHEX and PharmaMedDevice as a combined life sciences event. The number of 13,000 visitors in Philadelphia far exceeded expectations. 1,003 exhibitors from 20 different nations presented themselves.

BIOTECHNICA 2008 will boast a number of changes and new attractions. Stephan Ph. Kühne, Managing Board Member at the

Germany + Innovation = Niedersachsen

It all adds up to a state of discovery.

Research.

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If it helps people move forward, Niedersachsen is working on it. The world of tomorrow is emerging through innovation and an appetite for the new. Here in northwest Germany, those views are at home.

www.ipa-niedersachsen.de



Mobility.

On land, at sea, in the air and even in space, Niedersachsen is setting standards in mobility. Because we like helping people get ahead.



Niedersachsen

The state of things to come.



BIOTECHNICA's four-part concept features an exhibition showcase, international conferences, a partnering event and the European Biotechnica Award.

fair's makers, Deutsche Messe AG, promises: „The 2008 event will be more topical, offer more variety and more value than ever before.“ „We are introducing new, exciting content and features to raise the high level and quality of the event“, added Kühne.

Thus BIOTECHNICA will focus more on research and product development in every area of biotechnology - from foundation

research to equipment, bioinformatics and services, as well as the five areas of application: pharma/medicine, chemical industry, environment, agriculture and food. Due to the re-introduction of the annual schedule, BIOTECHNICA will also be able to accommodate new exhibitors from across the globe and from every area of biotechnology. The 2008 conference program will offer more scope and added value than ever

before. Not only will there be conferences dedicated to scientific aspects (BioScience) and business development (BioBusiness), but now also to policy issues (BioPolitics) as addressed by industry associations, government policymakers and representatives from the European biotech industry and economic development organizations. Accordingly, more than 400 experts from across the world will report on trends, research findings and the latest practical applications. Kühne elaborates: „This year's program represents a concentration of major conferences, congresses, symposia and workshops within the biotechnology sector. It takes us one step closer to the aim of creating one central European meeting-place for biotechnology.“

The new collaboration with the organizers of the scientific conference European BioPerspectives greatly enriches the program's content. This leading biotechnology congress, organized by DECHEMA (German Society for Chemical Engineering and Biotechnology) in tandem with twenty-one professional associations, will take place parallel to BIOTECHNICA for the first time.

Another addition to this year's BIOTECHNICA is the forum „Science to Market“, organized by the European Association of Pharma Biotechnology (EAPB), which will provide a separate meeting-place for pharmaceutical biotechnology at the event. The prime aim is to promote the scientific and research work that goes on within Europe's pharmaceutical biotechnology sector and to create an effective interface between research and industry.

Another highlight at BIOTECHNICA 2008 will be the three-day event EU Biotech Days. In addition to the planned joint display representing the general directorates „Business and Industry“ and „Science and Research“, headed respectively by Industry Commissioner Günter Verheugen and Research Commissioner Janez Potocnik, high-ranking representatives from the European parliament, EU research committees and the EU Commission will engage in conferences and panel discussions de-

Sugar Is Natural Energy – Energy Is Our Life

Nordzucker is a leading European sugar company with strong roots in Niedersachsen, where around 1000 employees work in company headquarters in Braunschweig, our sugar factories and our liquid sugar operations.

Nordzucker is already established across Europe in Poland, Slovakia, Hungary and Serbia. We produce around 1.9 million tonnes of sugar in total. We continue to expand after the reform of the European sugar market.

We reliably supply customers and end users throughout Europe with sugar of the highest quality via our Eurosugar sales and marketing company. Our international brand SweetFamily, with its innovative blue packaging, takes European retail marketing to a new level.

Nordzucker has also opened up a second business activity: in the market for renewable energy – because sugar beet still has a great deal of additional potential. Nordzucker operates the first bioethanol plant in Germany, producing renewable energy exclusively from sugar beet. It is also conducting pilot runs for the generation of biogas from sugar beet.



Nordzucker

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voted to such crucial issues and controversies as the time required to license plants in the EU, stock market prospects for biotech companies, European strategies on stem cell research and genetic engineering, as well as the EU climate strategy. The main goal of these events and discussions, according to Kühne, is to structure and promote the transfer of information and knowledge within the EU.

In addition, the Biopolitical Conference will provide an interdisciplinary summit for the biotech sector. Featuring a series of lectures, panel discussions and workshops, the event affords an ideal platform for knowledge transfer and networking between representatives from business, science and politics. The program of events is rounded off by the presentation of the bio-regions' innovation award.

Forums in the Exhibition Area

Some forums will be integrated into the exhibition and thus closer to the exhibitors and their visitors. These include the Innovation Forum, which features lectures from exhibiting companies and the Life Science Spotlight, a forum in which top-flight scientists present their latest research findings. Other events held within the exhibition area are Project Forum Biotechnology, BIOTECHNICA PARTNERING and "jobvector" – a careers event.

The international partnering concept for BIOTECHNICA has also been further developed in order to ensure that scientific progress and good ideas find the right business partners. In cooperation with the EBD Group, the leading partnering specialist for the international biotech industry, the organizers have created a new professional platform open to all participants at BIOTECHNICA, including visitors and conference attendees, with the aim of facilitating business deals and contacts. Even before the show begins, exhibitors, cooperation-seeking firms and visitors can identify potential business partners and arrange meetings at the show thanks to a web information and matchmaking



EUROPEAN BIOTECHNICA AWARD: BIOTECHNICA will be opened on 6 October 2008 by EU Commissioner Günter Verheugen and Walter Hirche, Niedersachsen's Minister for the Economy, Work and Transport. One of the traditional highlights of the opening ceremony will be the presentation of the EUROPEAN BIOTECHNICA AWARD, currently worth 100,000 EUR. More than 400 guests from industry, science and politics are expected to attend.

portal called „partnering ONE“, designed by the EBD Group.

Combating Lack of Personnel

Demand for experienced and suitably qualified personnel across the biotech sector is already high and is expected to become even more problematic. In order to overcome the skills shortage and support companies in their quest to find qualified people, BIOTECHNICA has considerably extended the area made available to its careers event „jobvector“ and will be offering attractive events designed to help in the recruitment of specialist personnel. BIOTEchnikum, located in Hall 9, is a real eye-catcher. This mobile information and exhibition centre on two levels is the brainchild of the Ministry for Education and Research. The full title of this initiative is „BIOTEchnikum. Discovering life's secrets - shaping the future.“ Participants are invited to experiment in practical laboratory

sessions and workshops under the supervision of experienced scientists. A supporting exhibition provides insights into the basic science, fields of research and diverse applications of biotechnology.

30 Top Scientists from Latin America

The German Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) invites a delegation of 30 highly specialized scientists from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba and Mexico to the BIOTECHNICA fair 2008 in Hanover. Under the brand „Research in Germany - Land of Ideas“, the Ministry will present German innovations and research results in Biotechnology and Bio-Informatics. The mission is supported by the BMBF in the frame of its „Internationalisation Strategy“. The BIOTECHNICA fair is serving as platform to present Germany as a land of research and high-technology to the potential Latin-American cooperation partners.

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Sugar is an allround talent, and will always be: its white crystals are sweet and give taste to almost everything that we eat and drink, it supplies energy and conserves without additional chemical additives. Sugar is a fixed and pure natural component in nutrition.



Modern boiling apparatus: innovative methods optimize the process of sugar production.

Text: Andreas Breyer

Sugar also grows steadily on our home acres and therefore is a secure supply module. Sugar beets support soil fertility and produce more oxygen than any other plant: from the amount of beets covering a football ground, about 50 people have enough oxygen to breathe for one year.

With its headquarters based in Braunschweig, five German factories in Clauen, Nordstemmen, Klein Wanzleben, Schladen and Uelzen, and seven sugar plants in other European countries, Nordzucker AG is the second largest producer in the sugar business in Europe. In the 2007/2008 financial year, with a sugar production of around 1.9 million tons, Nordzucker AG generated sales of around 1.3 billion EUR. The company has approximately 2,900 employees. In order to meet the future challenges of the European market, Nordzucker plans a steady growth in its core business.

Constant Innovations Improve Cultivation and Sugar Extraction

Due to technical advancement, the output of beet and sugar continuously rises on the fields and in the sugar factories. During the past 15 years, the sugar output has been increased by 1.5 per cent on average per annum. Major contributions to this success were on the one hand new cultures, which are more resistant against

diseases and pest. Plus, the development of the highly efficient and at the same time soil-conserving mulch seeding process was another major contribution. With this procedure, the leftovers of the previous plants are being mixed with the soil and help for a better ventilation and infiltration. This stimulates the growth of the plants and protects the soil from erosion. On the other hand, the well targeted use of utilities such as pesticides and fertilizers, combined with a steadily improved mentoring of the farmers, had as well a positive effect on the output. Thanks to the close relationship between Nordzucker and the beet farmers, innovative products are being developed together. One example for this is the strip till seeding that enables to loosen up the soil.

Energy Efficiency in the Focus

Sugar production is optimized permanently as well, with a special focus on energy utilization. Heat, which is needed for multiple purposes, is being used not only once, but several times, with a clever interconnection. With the use of power-heat coupling, the heat serves in a first run to generate energy. The rejected heat is in the end being used for heating. Additional energy is being generated by a block heat and power plant, which is run by biogas, generated from the sewage treatment works.

www.nordzucker.de



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Global Services

With more than 7,500 employees, TÜV NORD Group is one of Germany's largest technical service providers and number one in its field in the north of the country.

TÜV NORD owes its leading market position to the technical competence and a wide range of consulting, testing and servicing activities in the Systems, Mobility, Certification, Energy and Systems Engineering, Academy and International Divisions. The company has expertise in nearly all questions of technical safety, environmental protection, and the conformity assessment of management systems and products – nationally and internationally.

In the Line of Success

In 2007, TÜV NORD Group generated record sales revenues of 737.9 million EUR (previous year: 637); the best operating result in the history of the company. Sales revenues were up by 15.8 per cent. Consolidated EBIT without non-operating items amounted to 44 million EUR; this represents an increase of 60.6 per cent. The return on sales was six per cent. "The business is growing in all its major core activities," says Dr. Guido Rettig, Chairman of the Board of Management of TÜV NORD

AG. Earnings after tax stood at 18.6 million EUR (previous year: 19.1). Including the independent technical experts attached to the parent TÜV associations, the average number of employees, expressed as full-time equivalents, amounted to 7,528.



Making our world safer: TÜV NORD Group has broad experience in nearly all questions of technical safety.

Competence not only in testing: Among other fields, TÜV NORD Group also assists companies in consulting, certification, engineering and their ambitions.

Beyond its traditional boundaries as an inspection organisation, TÜV NORD Group is represented by its own personnel and by independent companies in other German regions and in 70 countries in Europe, Asia and America.

At Home in the Leading Markets

TÜV NORD Group's successful development can be seen particularly clearly in the growth of its international sales revenues, which rose by more than 50 per cent in 2007 to over 125 million EUR. This means that 17 per cent of TÜV NORD Group's sales revenues were generated abroad.

TÜV NORD Group is present in Europe, America, Asia and the Middle East with its own companies and with agencies.

The company is present in the world's future markets and assists enterprises based in these markets in their export endeavours. In the other direction, German companies receive support for their foreign business from TÜV NORD Group's international representatives and companies.

Values and Principles

It is TÜV NORD Group's aim to strengthen its position by customer orientation and flexibility in the performance of its services. Doing this, TÜV NORD Group will remain faithful to its principles: independence, neutrality and integrity will continue to be the basis for the work of the TÜV NORD Group. The shareholders of TÜV NORD AG are the long established technical inspection bodies RWTÜV, TÜV Nord and TÜV Hannover/Sachsen-Anhalt, whose special concern is the public good.



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Mastering Challenges

Volkswagen AG is by far the most important company in Niedersachsen. With 329,000 employees worldwide Volkswagen is heading for global leadership in innovation, competitiveness and eco-friendliness. CEO Dr. Martin Winterkorn explains how Volkswagen wants to become "the world's most fascinating car maker".

Interview: Dirk Maxeiner

Dr. Winterkorn, it is your stated goal to overtake Toyota as the world's most successful automaker. Have you not bitten off more than you can chew?

I firmly believe that the Volkswagen Group is the most forward-looking company in the automobile sector. In terms of innovative strength, design, precision and quality we are already better than our Japanese competitors. But we're also aiming to top the tables as far as customer satisfaction, sales and returns are concerned. We laid the foundations for doing that last year.

What exactly does that mean?

Well, to start with we're working very hard on making both the Group as a whole and the Volkswagen brand in particular more profitable. A more return-oriented approach, better processes, higher sales performance – these are all measures that are already translating into excellent figures. And we've also launched an as yet unmatched model offensive. The Volkswagen Group will be introducing 20 further models over the next 36 months. On top of that, there will be the successors to existing vehicles, such as the new Golf VI. We are intensifying our activities in segments like SUVs, pick-ups and vans, where we were hardly present in the past. If you look to US automakers, you can see what happens when an automobile manufacturer doesn't make an intensive commitment to developing new models.

New products are one aspect, but where is demand supposed to come from?

Your established markets are pretty sluggish, aren't they? With a differentiated product offering we can set new trends and win market shares in countries such as Germany and the USA. A good example is the Volkswagen Tiguan which immediately catapulted to the top following its market launch, becoming a bestseller in the SUV segment.

But it's also correct to say that our growth chiefly comes from markets such as China, India, Brazil or Russia. These are markets where the thirst for mobility is enormous. That's why we're developing these markets with very specific measures such as new plants, supplier networks and sales companies.

You're hardly likely to succeed with your traditional vehicle program.

That's correct. It's vital that our vehicles are very carefully tailored to the regional needs of customers. The "global car" is well and truly a thing of the past. If we look at India, for instance, this means we must build small, very inexpensive cars which are nevertheless convincing in terms of quality, customer benefit and environmental compatibility. One example is our New Small Family, which we presented as a study in 2007. We will be building a version of the up! for metropolitan areas in Western countries as well as variants specially designed for emerging markets. That brings us a potential sales volume of 500,000 cars per year in the long term.

"I firmly believe that the Volkswagen Group is the most forward-looking company in the automobile sector."

Dr. Martin Winterkorn, CEO Volkswagen AG



"The Volkswagen Group must become the first choice for the talents in our industry."

Dr. Martin Winterkorn, CEO Volkswagen AG



What is your response to the criticism levelled by some that Volkswagen has missed the boat as far as CO2 and environmentally compatible vehicles are concerned?

I would suggest that those critics take a good look at the facts. We launched the very first three-liter cars as early as the late 1990s with the Lupo and the Audi A2. Not only that – the Audi duo introduced in 1997 was the first series production hybrid vehicle in Europe.

Production of all these models has been terminated ...

Environmental innovations have to be accepted by our customers, too. So the price is an important factor. That's why we're focusing closely on optimizing the Volkswagen TDI and TSI engines or Audi's

TFSI technology. Volkswagen's BlueMotion series, Audi's e-models, SEAT's Eco-motive line or Škoda's GreenLine vehicles already cut consumption quite significantly without sacrificing driving pleasure. We're looking towards the future, too: we're making massive investment in second-generation biofuels. And we're working on series maturity for alternative drivetrain technologies such as hybrid engines, fuel cells or plug-in electric systems which are recharged by connecting a plug to a regenerative electric power source.

What about the USA, where Volkswagen used to be a cult?

There isn't much of that left now...

We hit the reset button in the USA last year. We're moving closer to our dealers,



closer to our customers. That's the only way we can really play a dominant role as the largest European importer – as THE German automaker – and follow up the successes of the Beetle era and the T2. I believe this also calls for production in the Dollar area.

But more important still, it requires the right products. These have to be products which are fine-tuned to the wants of American customers – design, equipment and, of course, price.

Should I be buying Volkswagen shares now?

Our share price reflects the success of our Group. We were the listed automaker with the best share price development in 2007. We will resolutely continue to press ahead with our profitable growth course.

We are investing in our future with great care and deliberation, using sound judgment and deploying our own resources. At the same time, we are keeping a close watch on costs. We have laid the foundation to make the Volkswagen Group a jewel for its shareholders in coming years and to create sustainable value.

That sounds good. But how does it relate to today?

We're already in a position to develop and produce our vehicles much more efficiently today. Our modular component system gives us a completely different grip on development costs, procurement costs and production costs. We can only survive competition if we get all our costs and processes right. And we're working flat out on that throughout the company.

How are you going to inspire your employees to join you?

Our employees play a key role. We need a top team to shape the future. We need people who take pride in their work, who are proud of the vehicles they build. Our most valuable asset is the potential and creativity in the hearts and minds of our workforce. We're already making good progress here. But we need the best designers, engineers, technicians, commercial staff and marketing professionals. The Volkswagen Group must become the first choice for the top talents in our industry. That's why developing young

potentials and our reputation as an attractive employer are right at the top of our agenda.

You've set the benchmark for the Group and its brands very high. What makes you so certain you will achieve your goals?

For me, the Volkswagen Group is today the world's most fascinating automobile manufacturer. We cover the entire product spectrum, from the inexpensive compact car through the super sports car to the 40-tonne truck.

And, apart from us, who else brings together eight brands under one roof so successfully? Each of these brands is a veritable gem in its own right with a strong independent profile. I don't think we need be afraid of any competitor.

Would you risk making a forecast and telling me where you think the Volkswagen Group will be ten years from now?

This company, its brands, and above all its people have almost inexhaustible potential. Our ideas, our know-how, the synergies we have yet to leverage: all this gives us confidence to master the challenges that lie ahead. Ten years from now we will be the benchmark when it comes to customer satisfaction, attractiveness as an employer, quality, returns, and also our commitment to the environment and society.



"On the move for everyone": This year's motto of the IAA Commercial Vehicles promises solutions and product innovation in all segments of commercial transportation on the road.

try, which is essential to economic growth both in Germany and abroad. The new IAA poster depicts a heavy truck, a van and a bus outlined on a dynamic red background. The world's most important trade fair for mobility is organized by the VDA and is setting new records for the number of exhibitors, the number of countries represented and the amount of exhibition space occupied.

The number of exhibitors is around 2,000, which is 25 per cent more than in the record year 2006, while the 275,000 square metres of exhibition space is ten per cent more than two years ago. This impressively reinforces the IAA's worldwide leading position among trade fairs showcasing mobility.

No wonder that, as early as 2006, the signals were set for a lasting partnership between the fairs management and the VDA, the German Association of the Automotive Industry. A long term contract has been signed back then, saying that the fair will take place in Hannover the forthcoming years in 2008, 2010 and 2012.

Hanover is Commercial Vehicle Competence

This means a true commitment to the fair trade location of Hanover with its international reputation. In recent years, Hanover has proved that it meets all requirements for an effective fair trade. What is it that makes the location in the capital of Niedersachsen so successful in a globalized world, with many similar events taking place all over the planet?

One reason can be found in the high standards. Says Stephan Ph. Kühne, member of the Board of the Deutsche Messe AG: "The major advantages of our location are the modern exhibition halls, the ideal infrastructure of the fair location and the city of Hanover, customer orientation, and service quality." Plus, the presentation of vehicles,

World of Trucks

Since 1992 – with the exception of the EXPO year 2000 – Hanover becomes competence centre for busses, light and heavy trucks every two years during the IAA Commercial Vehicles.



Text: Andreas Breyer, photos: IAA

Expectations are high every time the IAA Commercial Vehicles open its gates to the public. By then, the world of busses, light and heavy truck looks at the capital of Niedersachsen, the state located in the north western of Germany. The biyearly event is one of several major international fairs in the sector of investment goods taking place at the Hanover fair ground. Among those are other famous names such as the CeBIT, the Hanover Fair, and the AGRITECHNICA. This portfolio of international fairs makes Hanover the leading fairground in the world, with the IAA Commercial Vehicles the heaviest amongst them, in the true sense of the meaning.

A Year of New Records

The IAA's headline, "Commercial Vehicles: On the move for everyone" underlines the service-oriented nature of this key indus-

"We want to underscore again the essential role played by commercial vehicles in delivering people's everyday supplies and in enabling business to function."

Matthias Wissmann, President of the VDA

Making our world safer



TÜV NORD Group, with its staff of over 8,000, more than 6,300 of whom have technical or scientific backgrounds, is one of the biggest technical service providers in Germany and the biggest in the north of the country. In addition, it is active in more than 70 other countries of Europe, Asia, Africa and America. The Group owes its leading position in the market to its technical competence and to the broad range of consultancy, service and testing activities performed by its Mobility, Industry Services, International, Natural Resources, and Human Resources and Training business units.

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equipment and systems for goods and passenger transportation, which are the major part of the IAA Commercial Vehicles, makes special and high demands on a fairground and its architecture. Huge, bright halls with plain and largely free floating ceilings are the core issues for a fair trade in this branche, as well as a barrier free entry for vehicles. Furthermore, traffic access to the fairground and parking conditions are visitor-friendly.

On the Move for Everyone

But all the framework of the fairground is only half the battle. What's needed beyond that is a sense for upcoming trends and future customer needs. In short, it's innovation that counts. "You won't find more innovation or vehicle presentations at any other trade fair", stresses Matthias Wissmann, VDA president.

The organizers of the fair offer an outline programme that's perfectly tailored to the customers needs. This year, it includes an India Day, a Turkey Day and a Russia Day taking place during the fair. Therewith, the IAA Commercial Trucks 2008 pays tribute to three emerging markets and proofs again its will to continual innovation. Furthermore, this IAA will address comprehensively the questions of sustainable mobility and transport efficiency. Emission reduction and intermodal transport



The number of exhibitors is around 2,000 which is 25 per cent more than in the record year 2006.

motorists don't like the trucks when they are on the freeways."

However, the VDA president points out that trucks will "not be able to move all our freight traffic on their own" which, according to forecasts, will increase by 50 per cent in Germany and Europe in the next 15 years. He adds that "all modes of transport are going to be needed – trucks, railroads and inland waterways. The trench warfare

"All modes of transport are going to be needed: trucks, railroads and inland waterways. The trench warfare between them is a thing of the past."

Matthias Wissmann, President of the VDA

are burning topics that will be addressed on several symposia during the fair. Says Wissmann: "We want to underscore again the essential role played by commercial vehicles in delivering people's everyday supplies and in enabling business to function. All of us should consider that having fresh vegetables in the supermarket, for example, requires the use of trucks, even if some

between them is now finally a thing of the past, and each one should exhaust its potentials, both individually and in combination. There is enough transport available for everyone."

Platform of Trucks and Busses

All these topics will be addressed at the 62nd IAA Commercial Vehicles from Sep-



tember 25th to Oktober 2nd in Hanover. That makes this year's commercial vehicle fair again the ideal platform for exhibitors and professional visitors to initiate business, conclude contracts and debate future trends and challenges. Therefore, everyone is confident that the worlds leading fair in the business will not only meet the expectations, but once again manage to exceed them.

New Energy

In Germany Niedersachsen is a leader for the production of natural gas, wind energy and biomass. As a result, significant competence has developed in the federal state, in companies' know-how as well as in the research sector.

Text: Julia Koch

Völkersen, Böttersen, Söhlingen – these otherwise unknown villages are important sites when it comes to natural gas. Together with the North Sea they constitute the four most productive gas fields in Germany. There are overall about a hundred gas deposits in Niedersachsen – more than 90 percent of Germany's gas reserves are located there. No wonder then that Niedersachsen's importance for the German gas production is increasing. In 2007 its share in the country's overall gas production rose from 91 percent to 94 percent, reports the Association of German Oil and Gas Producers in Hanover.

Regarding oil, Niedersachsen is second with 40 percent of the country's production. Also the most important oil port is in the state: the oil terminal and the refinery of Wilhelmshaven are connected with other German industrial centres by pipelines. The building of a new deep sea container terminal will increase the importance of the port for the energy sector.

Renewable Energy Above-average

As a result a lot of know-how has developed in Niedersachsen. "The good geographical position and the strong local oil and gas producing industry are a good basis for international service companies," says Dr. Gernot Kalkoffen, president of the Association of German Oil and Gas Producers. For this reason a variety of service companies have set up their European headquarters and research facilities there.

Hanover, Vechta, Celle and Bad Bentheim are locations where many companies offering technical services and developing high technology for oil and gas exploration are located. The most important ones include KCA Deutag in Bad Bentheim, IT-AG, Halliburton and Baker Hughes in Celle and Schlumberger in Vechta.

The natural depletion of reserves has caused the oil and gas companies to invest heavily in technology to keep production on a steady level.

They use that expertise worldwide: in 2007, total investments in the industry increased by 30 percent to 1.8 billion EUR; more than three quarters of which went abroad. Because of these activities employment has steadily increased, by twelve percent in 2007. Research in oil and gas production, drilling and gas supply is carried out by the renowned Technical University of Clausthal. It also offers courses to become a Petroleum Engineer, as one of only two German universities.

Since Germany will phase out the production of nuclear energy by the year 2020 and since it wants to increase its share of renewable energy to around half of the supply by 2050, the production and sup-



Photo: WEG Wirtschaftsverband Erdöl- und Erdgasgewinnung

port of renewables have a high priority. Niedersachsen plays an important part in reaching that goal because it has dominance within Germany at wind power and biogas. An above-average amount of renewable energy is produced there – 16.1 percent of the overall electricity. So it has already surpassed the German government's goal of increasing the overall share of renewables to 12.5 percent in 2010.

Attracting Innovative Companies

Most of the renewable energy is derived from wind power. Because of its windy coastline wind turbines were installed in Niedersachsen from very early on. Today, 4,914 plants are installed in Niedersachsen with a capacity of 5,647 megawatts. Innovative companies have settled there, offering services along the production line and producing about 40 percent of the wind turbines installed in Germany.



Niedersachsen plays an important role in reaching the goal of supplying the whole of Germany with energy for the next 20 years. An above-average amount of renewables is produced in the northwest of the federal state.



Photo: RWE Dea AG

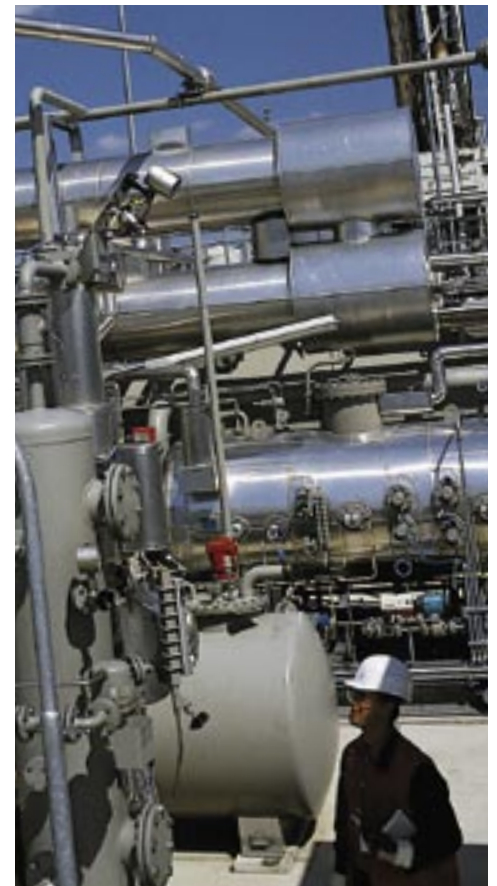


Photo: RWE Dea AG

However, bio-energy is also of increasing importance. Its possibilities began to be recognized in Niedersachsen about ten years ago. When prices for agricultural products were low, many farmers discovered biogas as a chance for some extra income. The Renewable Energy Sources Act made it financially attractive for them to invest in biogas plants. Since the act guaranteed them for 20 years a certain fixed price for the electricity produced, many farmers saw the chance for a steady extra income.

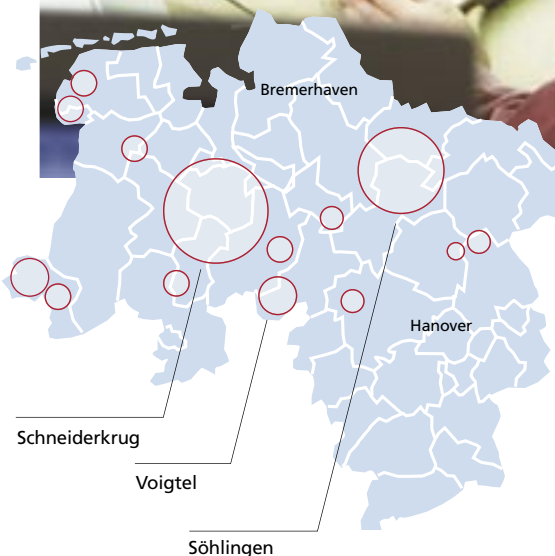
Feeding on Liquid Manure and Biological Waste

In consequence, from 2000 to 2003 about 300 plants were built in Niedersachsen, feeding on liquid manure and biological waste. Then the act was amended in 2004, promoting the use of energy crops such as maize or winter rye, and causing a second surge of plant building. About 450 new and much bigger plants were set up. Since one plant cost about two million EUR, it



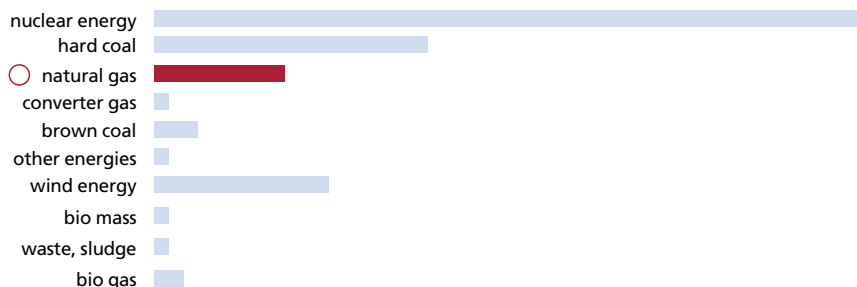
Photo: EON Avacon

Photo: Frank Bierstedt, TU Clausthal



POWER PRODUCTION

Source: Federal Office for Statistics



"The good geographical position and the strong local oil and gas producing industry are a good basis for global service companies."

Dr. Gernot Kalkoffen,
president of the Association
of German Oil and Gas Producers

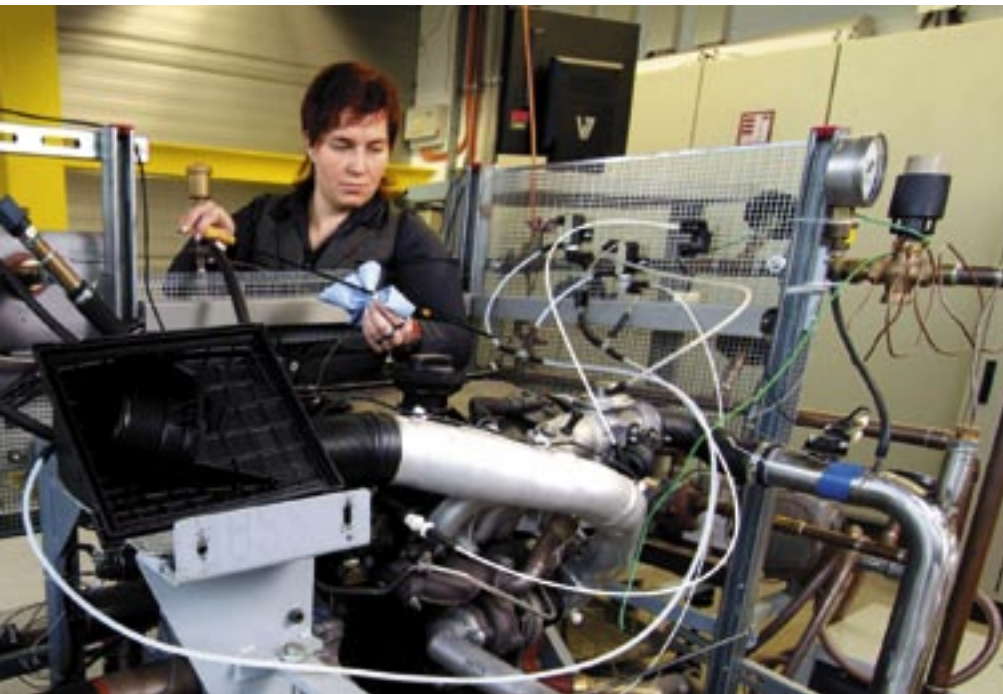
meant a major investment for a farmer. But "especially farms with land poor in resources have to have a greater innovative ability," said Dr. Gerd Carsten Höher from the Ministry of Agriculture. In total about 750 million EUR have been invested in biogas since 2004.

Biogas Production in Niedersachsen

Today more than a third of Germany's biogas is produced in Niedersachsen. The plants produce about two million megawatt-hours electricity per year and cover 3.8 percent of the state's power requirement. Politicians aim at raising that share to 8 percent in 2010. Consequently, the use of the land is changing: since the demand for energy crops has grown, they are increasingly cultivated. Soon ten percent of cultivable land could be used for them. The development has caused a lot of companies to be set up in Niedersachsen, planning or constructing the plants. "About a

thousand jobs have been created in the past three or four years," says Höher. "MT-Energie had two employees six years ago. Now they have 250." MT-Energie in Zeven is the third biggest biogas company in Germany and is represented in Italy, Hungary and the Czech Republic.

The market leader EnviTec Biogas AG is also located in Niedersachsen. Founded in 2002 in Lohne, it is already present through its own subsidiaries, joint ventures and sales offices in many European states as well as in India and China. In Belgium, Croatia and Greece, the company is in the process of planning and constructing biogas plants. After getting its first contract worth 3.2 million EUR in the UK in December 2007, CEO Olaf von Lehmden vindicated: "We are aggressively pushing ahead our expansion into other European markets, and this contract shows that this is the right strategy." In 2006 EnviTec generated revenues of 100.7 million EUR.



Continuous research is done in all fields of renewable energy.

Several hundred kilometres away from its headquarters, EnviTec is currently constructing a large biogas park with an electrical connected load of 20 megawatts. It will also build a plant that transforms biogas into natural-gas-quality gas and feed it into the natural gas network. It is supposed to produce 22 megawatts per hour, making it the largest biogas processing plant to date to be connected to the natural gas network.

"We are convinced that biogas, too, will soon develop into a viable alternative to fossil fuels if a reliable political framework can be guaranteed in the future", believes Olaf von Lehmden, CEO of EnviTec Biogas AG.

Research is done continually in all fields of renewable energy. For example the Interdisciplinary Centre for Sustainable Development at the University of Göttingen initiated and participated in a project where a whole village changed from conventional energy supply to biogas. The University of Clausthal is also very active in research, for example in developing a combination of offshore wind power and natural gas.

Furthermore, an interdisciplinary Energy Research Centre Niedersachsen (EFZN) was set up in Goslar. The foundation stone was laid in 2007. Starting in 2009, 80 scientists from the universities of Clausthal, Braunschweig, Göttingen, Hannover and Oldenburg will be working together on questions about all energy related processes, such as energy production, raw materials, system technology, waste disposal, computer science for power systems, nuclear and energy law, economy and new technology. Mainly the state of Niedersachsen, but also the University of Clausthal and the town of Goslar are investing twelve million Euros in the centre. 14 laboratories are planned. In 2007 the Energy Research Centre and the Ministry of Economics of Niedersachsen have started organising the annual Energy Days of Niedersachsen with changing focus.

Innovative Power Plants

With the closing down of atomic plants and advances in technology, new concepts of power plants are being developed. Currently five new power plants are planned in Niedersachsen, substituting older and less efficient ones and also making up for the closing of an atomic plant in Stade. Four of them are planned as coal-fired power plants. One will be an innovative project in Stade run by the chemical company Dow and the energy supply company

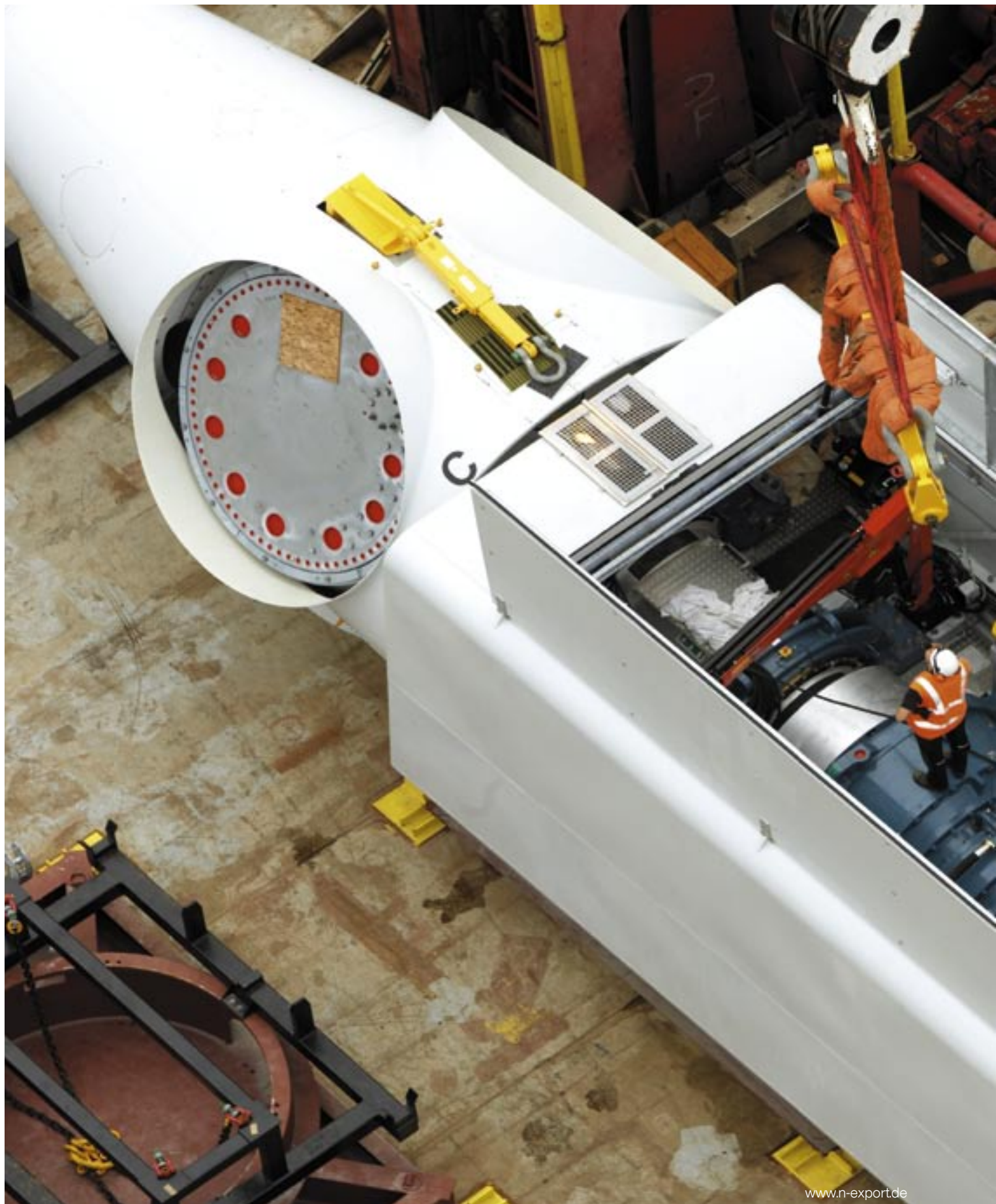
EnBW Energie Baden-Württemberg AG. To satisfy the Dow factory's huge energy requirements the two companies plan to combine a coal-fired power plant and a gas and steam turbine power plant with an output exceeding 1,000 megawatts. A combined heat and power system forwards excess heat and steam to the Dow production sites to increase the site's efficiency while lowering CO₂ emissions. Dow and EnBW will also explore using the by-product hydrogen from the site to generate a portion of the power and steam requirements with no CO₂ emissions. The plant could be in operation in 2014.

Compressed Air Energy Storage

In addition, EnBW is pursuing the project of building a compressed air energy storage plant and the first German marine energy plant in Niedersachsen. The compressed air energy storage plant is supposed to store regenerative energy and to balance fluctuating generation, triggered amongst others by future off-shore-wind parks. For the marine energy plant EnBW is looking for a suitable location on the North Sea Coast. It particularly sees the potential in connection with coastal protection measures and harbour development projects.

Such projects and technologies are becoming increasingly important in the worldwide struggle to lower CO₂ emissions.

Niedersachsen is on a good path: the above-average development of renewable energy and the comparatively low use of brown coal have brought about a much stronger decrease in CO₂ emissions in the state (minus 10.5 percent) than in the rest of the country (minus 5.6 percent).





Windy Work

Niedersachsen is a wind energy state. Most of Germany's wind turbines are installed there, and its wind energy companies are international leaders. Offshore wind power presents new opportunities.

Text Julia Koch

They are the symbols of the energy revolution: almost 5,000 wind turbines are currently rotating in Niedersachsen. It is the state of wind power, leading within Germany regarding the existing capacity as well as newly installed power. "Wind power has become an important economic factor in our state," says Christian Wulff, Prime Minister of Niedersachsen. "And we have immense advantages of location." Niedersachsen profits hugely from its windy coastal region. This is where most of the state's wind turbines stand and where development of wind power started more than 20 years ago.

One of the pioneers of the industry was Aloys Wobben. The engineer started working on wind turbines as early as in 1975. In 1984 he founded his company Enercon in Aurich as a one-man business. Today, Enercon is market leader in Germany with a share of 50.3 percent, and it is one of the four leading wind turbine manufacturers worldwide with a turnover of 1.8 billion EUR in 2006. In total it employs over 10,000 people worldwide, suppliers included.

In 1973 the oil crisis caused Wobben to concern himself with alternative energy. "The general ban on driving on the 'Autobahn' made many people realise that fossil fuels were limited." His first turbine could produce 7.5 kilowatts. More than twenty years later and after great leaps in development Enercon produces turbines with a capacity up to 6,000 kilowatts, mirroring the overall advance in technology.

Wobben, still the sole owner of Enercon, acts on conviction and regularly speaks out for the use of renewable energies to reduce CO2 emissions. The 56-year-old has received several awards for his commitment and, according to Manager Magazin, today he is among the 30 richest Germans. He is little-known outside professional circles though and rarely gives any interviews.

One who has been with him from the start is overall production manager Klaus Peters. They constructed the first prototype together. "Nobody could have foreseen success back then," Peters says. He is happy to "produce a peaceful product that's so much in demand throughout the world".

Klaus Peters remembers that at the beginning people did not know much about wind power and were worried about what to expect.

"There were heated debates. But now emotions have subsided and discussions have become more rational." While Enercon's first clients were mainly farmers and citizens' initiatives, today their customers are energy suppliers. Still, some of the early clients have grown with the company and increased their investments.

The invention of gearless technology was crucial for Enercon's rise. A small number



"Nobody could have foreseen success back then. I am happy to produce a peaceful product that's so much in demand throughout the world."

Klaus Peters, Senior Production Manager, Enercon

of rotating components enable an almost friction free energy flow. "To this day that is our unique selling proposition," Peters explains. The manager also ascribes success to the great in-house production depth of 80 percent. "We produce all main components ourselves. That way we can adjust them to each other and get very durable machines. Besides, we like to be independent." Two to three factories are built every year, in and outside Germany.

Great emphasis is placed on R&D

100 engineers are employed in that area. "We are the technological leader worldwide, and we want to keep that position," says Peters. "Future questions are how to achieve still greater efficiency, how to accumulate wind energy and how to use it as a fuel." Wobben himself, engineer to the core, still occupies himself with the improvements of his products. He also pursues other technologies: water power turbines, seawater and brackish water desalination systems and electric cars are being developed. Enercon provides turbines for a hydroelectric power plant in the river Weser. To date, Enercon has installed more than 12,500 wind turbines in over 30 countries. For the next five years an annual growth of 20 percent is expected, more than half of it outside Germany.

Political Encouragement

The use of wind power would not have developed as it has without political encouragement. The first great boost came in 1990 with the precursor to the Renewable Energy Sources Act, introducing feed-in electricity tariffs, making it worthwhile for private individuals to invest in wind power. One of the first to do so was Peter Ahmels, a farmer in the coastal village of Hooksiel and President of the German Wind Energy Association (BWE) from 1997 to 2007. "We farmers had economical problems back then and badly needed an alternative," Ahmels recalls. In 1991 and 1993 he put two turbines on his land, producing 300 and 500 kilowatts respectively. "The coast was the core region for wind power



because at the time turbines were so low that they depended on a great amount of wind," the 50-year-old explains. He was the pioneer in the region, colleagues soon followed. "So a nucleus came into being." Wind power was first embraced as a technological innovation, it spread quickly. Too quickly, some found in the mid 1990s. Citizens' action groups against wind power were founded. Their objections included noise, rhythmic shadows and the "asparagus-ing" of the landscape. Also local governments wanted to regulate development and changed building laws accordingly, slowing down expansion. Today, it takes about two to three years to get a permit for a new location. But as technology advanced it became profitable to have wind turbines inland. The machines not only grew cheaper but also higher, measuring a hundred metres



Photo: Bard Engineering

Bard rotor blades are gigantic, making transport on land almost impossible. Blades are manufactured practically on the water edge and are transported directly offshore.

and more. The first models had been 30 metres high. "Triple height, triple profit," says Ahmels. And since operators pay trade tax, local governments are today rethinking expansion. The government of Niedersachsen has always regarded wind power with favour, says Ahmels.

Wind energy is the fastest growing energy sector; the global wind energy market increased by 30 percent in 2007.

To support the industry Niedersachsen founded the German Wind Energy Institute DEWI GmbH in Wilhelmshaven in 1990. The company has accompanied the

development of wind energy in basic research, development of measuring methods, political decision-making and in tasks and services connected with the realisation of wind farms. Today DEWI's services sector accounts for more than 90 percent of the company's turnover. DEWI offers its services in about 40 countries worldwide.

Wind Energy:
the Fastest Growing Energy Sector

Essential research is also done by ForWind, the Centre for Wind Energy Research of the universities Oldenburg and Hanover. It was founded in 2003 with federal help. Today the Centre's main focus is the utilization of offshore wind power, i.e. meteorology, wind power forecast, product life prognosis and electricity network connection. Beside Enercon, many more companies have settled in Niedersachsen like GE

Wind Energy GmbH in Salzbergen, a General Electric branch, Prokon Nord Energiesysteme GmbH in Leer, Plambeck Neue Energie AG in Cuxhaven and Bard Engineering GmbH in Emden. More than 40 percent of the wind turbines installed in Germany were made in Niedersachsen. Over 10,000 jobs have so far been created, the offshore wind industry is expected to lead to another 5,000 to 10,000. Until about five years ago the industry mainly produced for the German market, but the focus has shifted: companies export 74 percent of their products now. No wonder: wind energy is the fastest growing energy sector; the global wind energy market increased by 30 percent in 2007. And German manufacturers supplied more than a third.

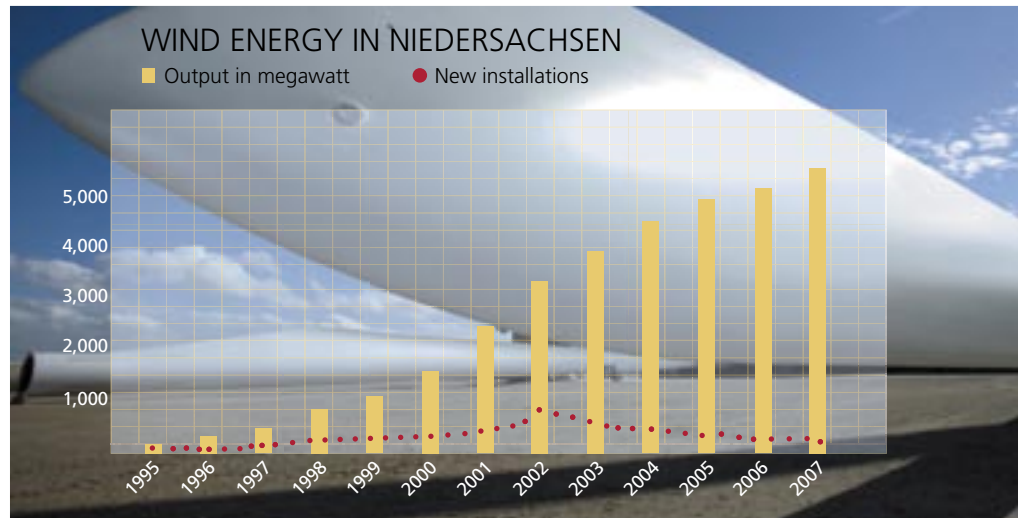
While some say that wind power in Niedersachsen has reached its limits on land, Peter Ahmels still sees a huge potential in

the so-called repowering, i.e. exchanging older and smaller turbines by new, higher and more efficient ones. Using fewer turbines capacity can actually be increased. „I am positive that performance can be tripled," says Ahmels.

A New Breath of Wind

Today, new pioneering is required for the development of offshore wind power. According to the German Wind Energy Association, it could cover more than 15 percent of Germany's energy requirements in the long run. In the North Sea and the Baltic Sea wind parks with a capacity of 25,000 megawatts could be installed by 2030. These would require over 50 billion Euros of investments.

So far, only two testing offshore turbines were installed in Germany, both close to the coast. One reason is a more extensive permit procedure. Besides, the wind farms have to be installed far from the coast so as not to impair the natural scenery. Demands on technology are much higher and experience with turbines on the open sea is still lacking. One pioneer to tackle such



challenges is Bard Engineering GmbH in Emden. Founded in 2003, the company invests heavily in the development and construction of offshore technology. It has no competition to fear from big manufacturers: GE Wind and Enercon concentrate on the onshore business.

Bard Engineering wants to install several offshore wind farms in the German Bight. Three farms with 80 five-megawatt turbines each are now being planned. So far one permit has been obtained. "Bard Off-

shore 1" will be located about 100 kilometres northwest of the island of Borkum, construction is due to start in 2009.

Floating Foundations

Bard had to find new technological solutions for the conditions off the German coast. While other European countries put up offshore wind parks close to their coasts at a water depth of 15 to 20 metres, wind turbines in the North Sea have to be constructed for depths of 30 to 40 metres and they have to be 100 kilometres away from shore. The company invented a three-legged foundation for water depth up to 45 metres and a rotor blade almost 60 metres long specially designed for the wind conditions on the open sea.

While two wind turbine prototypes are currently being tested onshore, the foundation will be tried for the first time near shore in summer 2008.

So far, Bard has invested more than 57 million EUR at its locations in Emden, Cuxhaven and Bremen. It employs 250 people directly and more than 1,500 people through component suppliers.

Managing Director Heiko Roß sees huge potential in the offshore market: "Two-thirds of the earth are covered with water. Floating foundations are being developed. It's an immensely exciting subject." Aims are ambitious: Bard wants to be the world's largest offshore wind farm operator by the end of the decade. But Bard is not the only player in the field:

"I am positive that performance can be tripled through repowering."

Dr. Hans-Peter Ahmels,
former President
of the German Wind Energy Association



Photos: Siemens

The first inland turbines were about 30 metres high, now they measure 100 metres or more.

38 permits for wind farms in the North Sea have been applied for so far, 18 got granted. A test park about 45 kilometres off Borkum will be the first to be installed. Starting in 2008, twelve turbines made by REPower and Multibrid producing five megawatts each are being tested.

More Financial Support

Another important prospective wind park operator is Plambeck Neue Energien AG in Cuxhaven. The company started in 1995 with onshore wind parks and now plans to set up seven wind parks in the North Sea and the Baltic Sea, with up to 680 turbines, requiring an investment of six to eight billion Euros. Two projects in the North Sea were approved of so far. At "Borkum Riffgrund" 77 wind turbines are to be installed in the first construction stage.

The investment of 700 million EUR will produce 400 megawatts. Construction is scheduled to start in 2009/2010. For the final stage up to 180 plants are planned with

a capacity of 720 megawatts. The company would have liked to have started sooner, however, according to spokesman Rainer Heinsohn, additional conditions to protect the environment, inadequate feed-in compensation, technological problems and a long discussion about the grid connection slowed down progress. "Now everything is going pretty smoothly though", he says.

The government of Niedersachsen recognised early on that the wind industry provides new jobs.

Plambeck also extends its onshore activities with six wind parks in the building and seven more permitted. It also intends to expand internationally, they have done so in Hungary, Turkey and Bulgaria. After

two years that fell short of expectations, the company achieved an EBIT of 15.9 million EUR in 2007.

Bard Engineering and Plambeck as well as the German Wind Energy Association place great emphasis on the importance of more financial support for offshore energy in the Renewable Energy Sources Act. So far, in other European countries a higher compensation has been paid. But the planned amendment of the act will raise the price from nine cents to twelve cents per kilowatt-hour plus two cents for projects realised by 2013. That will make investments more attractive. And only with offshore energy will Germany be able to reach its goal of increasing the share of renewable energies to 20 percent in 2020.

On the whole, the wind industry in Germany and especially in Niedersachsen has reason to be optimistic, with a fast growing global market and an advantage in technology and know-how through many years of experience.



Facing Global Challenges

Strong growing export figures, massive investments in infrastructure and a decisive economic policy for SMEs are marks of Niedersachsen. Walter Hirche, Minister for Economics about the perspectives of the federal state in the dynamics of globalisation.

Interview: Hans Gäng, photos: local global

In the whole of Germany particularly exports are growing quite dynamically, even more so in Niedersachsen. How do you explain this and what sort of potential is going to remain in the mid term?

Last year especially our exports did indeed increase by 9.4 percent, a rate which was substantially above overall German

exports (8.5 percent). This is mainly due to a rise in Niedersachsen's main exports which are for the most part related to vehicles and their accessories. I am quite confident that we will be able to reach similar increases in exports in the future, too.

Has Niedersachsen got what it takes to become a European energy hub?

Is the necessary investment in infrastructure sufficient?

Yes, Niedersachsen does have what it takes to become a European energy distributor, i.e. a hub, and it is already on its way to that position. The fact that natural gas has been gathered and stored for decades is an excellent basis. Both activities have led to a very well developed infrastructure which is now available to

supply Western Europe with natural gas in the future. Quite some time ago I was presented with preliminary plans for the transport and intermediate storage of Russian natural gas in Niedersachsen. In the meantime, plans for pipelines routes have been drawn up and first permits for the extension of existing underground reservoirs as well as for the construction of new reservoirs were granted. It takes more though to be a European energy hub. In the electricity sector Niedersachsen can offer the feeding-in of energy from offshore windparks. Furthermore, plans to realize coal-fired power plants at the North Sea coast have been initiated. As far as the necessary investment in infrastructure is concerned, I do believe that it is first of all the industry's responsibility to draw up plans for the infrastructure that will be necessary for a European energy hub, such as power plants, pipelines, and cable routes.

What cluster potentials do renewable energies offer and how competitive will these clusters be in the long term?

Niedersachsen is number One when it comes to wind energy, for the use of biomass as a source of energy we are leading throughout Germany as well. I do expect considerable potential for growth in the field of offshore wind energy. Niedersachsen early on got the sea ports of Cuxhaven and Emden ready to be offshore base ports. Over the past two years several innovative offshore companies have settled in both of these regions; these companies want to create over a thousand jobs along the Niedersachsen coast by 2011. They include BARD Engineering GmbH who, for us in Niedersachsen, are the pioneers of the offshore industry, and AMBAU GmbH, the leading producers of towers for wind energy plants. I am confident that shortly more companies will follow suit because the entire sector depends on locations that are close to the coast and that own infrastructure capable of supporting offshore activities. These

new companies will mean a sustained strengthening for the whole coastal area.

You keep talking about mobility as one area of competence of the Niedersachsen economy – what else is this but the automotive industry?

And where are the links and ties that are indicative of a cluster and that could attract foreign companies to Niedersachsen?

Traffic and mobility are among the most exciting issues in the future of mankind; in Niedersachsen they are at the top of our list of priorities. This is, of course, not only because we are one of the largest production centres for the automotive industry on a European level, we as a state also have a large surface area. The ongoing expansion of the transport system to improve mobility is, therefore, one essential pillar in the Niedersachsen transport policy. An efficient and sustainable infrastructure is an indispensable prerequisite for economic growth. It is imperative and an urgent issue for the economic development of the state that we connect all economic areas through appropriate motorways, an improved rail network as well as through an extension of our waterways.

In addition, what is of the essence today more than ever is intelligent solutions which make mobility possible at acceptable costs and conditions.

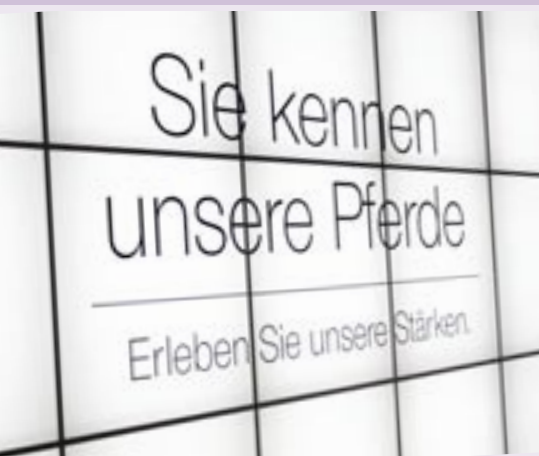
There is hardly any other region in Europe that has the same expertise in the field of mobility. Naturally here in Niedersachsen, just like in many other German regions, the automotive industries plays an important role, it is closely linked to Volkswagen. Everybody knows the Volkswagen "Beetle" which has turned into the symbol for cars made in Germany. There are specialisations on top of that, in the areas rail track expertise, shipbuilding and shipowning, aircraft construction, traffic control and in logistics. Niedersachsen also has renowned research institutes which develop for-



There is hardly any other region in Europe that has the same expertise in the field of mobility.

Walter Hirche, Minister for Economics, Niedersachsen

WITTY CAMPAIGN



Niedersachsen is a state with excellent research locations, innovative business companies and the world market leader in many industries. The campaign "Innovatives Niedersachsen" focuses on this strengths: Both the state and the companies present the innovative power of Niedersachsen and convey a sense of how many options the business and science location offers.

All that is described in a self confident, charming and witty way. The campaign focuses on placing ads in print media or on the internet, billboard and cinema advertising and additional ways of promotion. With the Slogan "You already know our horses. Experience our power", Niedersachsen has embedded itself nationwide in the minds of the opinion leaders since starting the campaign in the spring of 2007.

Also, two prestigious awards prove the fact that the tone and style of the campaign attract attention and are well-received. The first evaluation shows that Niedersachsen has made the right decision with the campaign:

More than 65 percent of the target group were reached, which is a total of 4,2 mio people.

www.innovatives.niedersachsen.de

ward-looking concepts for today's traffic problems. Its good infrastructure turns Niedersachsen into a significant logistics hub in the centre of Europe. This is where the central axes north-south and east-west meet. Whenever goods are being transported between Paris and Warsaw or between Copenhagen and Milan, they just have to pass via Niedersachsen. As far as the financing of the traffic infrastructure goes, our regions are certainly not short of imagination.

Recently a new motorway was opened along the German-Dutch border; it was significantly funded by German and Dutch companies in the region. This was a novelty, since up until then it had been exclusively the government that financed road construction. For the extension of the "Autobahn 1" which going from Hamburg to Cologne passes through Niedersachsen, a solution for finance that includes private investors was developed. This means that private investors will receive earnings from toll levied for lorries, a charge which is relatively new in Germany.

Trade fairs are a trademark of the federal state. What does the federal state of Niedersachsen do to benefit from the interest of foreign visitors?

For Niedersachsen as an economic and innovative location Deutsche Messe carries an important image. This is where the world meets.

The fairs as a platform help us to further boost and intensify internationalisation of the companies in our state. Niedersachsen companies have the opportunity to build up contacts and strengthen export-orientation right at their doorstep. We support them in this by organizing, for example, events geared to making new business contacts, we also organize and support joint stands at fairs.

Let us take as an example Hannover Messe and its "b2fair". This is the place where, thanks to the fair's international

network of partners, companies can input their profiles and can get into conversation with potential business partners. Along these lines international fairs are increasingly turning into matchmaking events.

"I always travel accompanied by the heads of medium-sized Niedersachsen companies. We prepare these trip carefully with our partners."

You yourself quite often accompany heads of the state's companies on their trips to growth markets. What is it that you do and how do the heads of these companies benefit?

I always travel accompanied by the heads of medium-sized Niedersachsen companies. We prepare these trip carefully with our partners, the Chamber of Industry and Commerce of Niedersachsen and the chambers of commerce abroad; and we have noticed that participation in such events which aim at stimulating new co-operations as well as making contact locally tend to rather encourage foreign trade and export business. I am particularly pleased that trips always include participants from new companies.

What will you do to make the location and its companies better known internationally?

So far the marketing of our location is still in its early stages, we need to intensify this. Well, this is the purpose of this magazine of which two more editions are planned for the coming years. We also want to extend the use of our award-winning innovation campaign for international business. To do so we will first need

to check whether our texts are suitable to be used in English. Every year, 3 October is an important date for us, this is when we present ourselves abroad in co-operation with German embassies or consulates general. In 2009 we will be in Washington, for example.

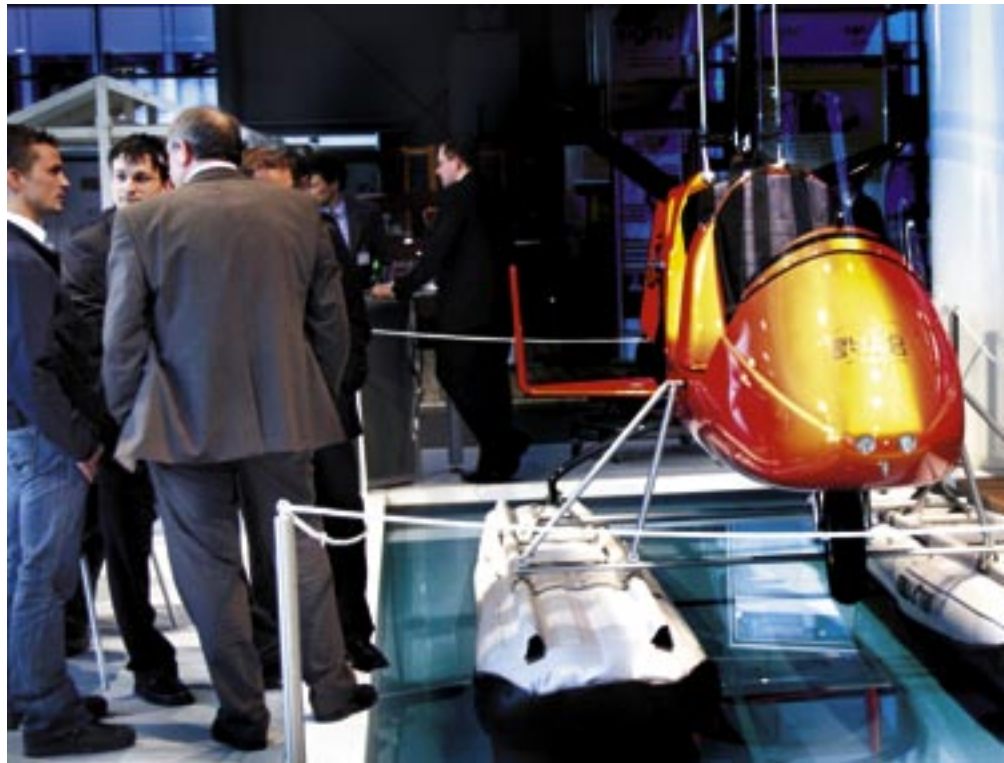
What regions does your state intend to particularly target in the near future – and how does this relate to the cluster initiatives?

Over the next few years, we will continue targeting the Arab countries (because this is where we have to catch up), Russia and the CIS countries will also be on our itinerary. Furthermore, we want to strengthen our network linking international partner regions by including other, economically strong regions, so that our companies may benefit. This may well mean very specific delegations which will be composed of representatives of just a few clusters. For 2009, for example, we are planning a trip to the South of the USA for the automotive and aerospace industries.

More and more states have an agency to promote export and investments.

Will Niedersachsen, too, present itself "with a new face" to future markets?

At present my office is preparing a bill for "Niedersachsen Global", a company that is due to start activities by the end of this year and which will absorb the Investment Promotion Agency IPA. It will be in charge of foreign trade, the national and international fair business as well as of promoting our location, an area which has so far been neglected. The new company will receive the full support of my office, of the state's Chamber of Industry and Commerce, of Nord/LB as well as of Deutsche Messe AG. In future, Niedersachsen will make itself more noticed abroad than it has been the case so far. As this magazine shows, we do have a lot to offer.



Niedersachsen's SME and research institute at international exhibitions.



Conferences as well as business delegations create opportunities for networking and information.



Photo: Inka Ziegenhagen



NGlobal to Start

Niedersachsen combines investment promotion and export promotion in a new corporation from 2009 onwards. In this way, the federal state government stays abreast of the facts that locations and small and medium-sized enterprises are subordinated to the strong international competition.

NGlobal will support SMEs in performing at trade fairs. NGlobal will also coordinate the state's representation in order to succeed in new economic markets.

From 2009 onwards, Niedersachsen has a new address from an international point of view. The regional entity NGlobal, which was decided on by the Cabinet in September, provides services for export promotion and for the settlement of new companies, everything from a single source. That way, the NGlobal GmbH takes over the tasks of the previously existing investment promotion agency IPA, as well

as the tasks of the export promotion department of the Ministry of Economics, Employment and Transport. The federal state of Niedersachsen holds 51 per cent of the shares in the new corporation. The Niedersachsen Chamber of Industry and Commerce (NIHK), the Chambers of Commerce Hanover and Brunswick, the Deutsche Messe and the Nord/LB hold the other shares.



Photo: Regine Rabanus

With the foundation of the new corporation, the federal state government stays abreast of the facts that locations and small and medium-sized enterprises in the federal state are subordinated to the strong international competition. In spite of the continuing increase in exports from Niedersachsen, the federal state government talks of a "considerable deficit in internationalisation". The regional entity's systematic countermeasures shall eliminate this deficit. NGlobal shall help companies to recognise and use opportunities for growth and safeguarding the future abroad in a better way.

Following the International Trend

According to the cabinet decision, the activities of the federal state concerning the settlement of new occupiers shall be adjusted to the rising standards and the tightened competition. NGlobal shall

NGlobal will support SMEs in performing at trade fairs. NGlobal will also coordinate the state's representation in order to succeed in new economic markets.

"build up a professional investment promotion, which is edited within the federal state government, for the economic location of Niedersachsen, nationally and internationally".

International Trend

Export promotion and investment promotion consolidated in a common agency is an international trend that is already followed by numerous federal states in Germany. The objective to combine international activities in order to gain synergy is also shared by the state's Chamber of Industry and Commerce, which has developed a list of claims for this purpose.

NGlobal shall help companies to recognise and use opportunities for growth and safeguarding the future abroad in a better way.

NGlobal shall be linked closely to the municipal and regional business promotion, as well as to the cluster and technology initiatives in the federal state. NGlobal will support SMEs in performing at national and international trade fairs. NGlobal will also coordinate the state's representation in order to succeed in new economic markets, and, furthermore, NGlobal will develop new locations at the gulf. The new shareholders in NGlobal – Nord/LB and the strongly internationalised Deutsche Messe – will also provide their global networks of representation and of offices.

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Connected with modern China

In Germany, there are numerous Chinese institutes, clubs, academies and organisation. However, the China Zentrum in Hanover is unique.

It is connected with China and the economy and, at the same time, with culture and science. The history of the institute started already long before its foundation eleven years ago. According to an agreement between the German government and China in the year 1988, Goethe Institutes should have been founded in China and Chinese cultural institutes in Germany. But the institute in Hanover could not be realized until 1996. At that time, the Niedersachsen government entered into a framework agreement with the Chinese Ministry of Education on the foundation of the Chinese Institute in Hanover, the first collective Chinese-German institute.

Thus, the Chinese Institute possesses splendid relations to economy, science and politics in Germany and in China. Nevertheless, it is not sustained at the expense of the public but it has been financing its projects mainly on its own from the beginning on. This market mechanism makes the institute's activities customer-oriented. Only those courses, seminars and programmes

that are really in demand make their way. Hence, the institute can work financially independently.

The institute is a popular institution for qualification. Each year, approximately 50 delegations from China are coming to the Chinese Institute in Hanover for further education courses. About 100 participants from German companies and organisations are instructed there each year.

Cooperation in the field of vocational training.

The Chinese Institute started a vocational training project, which is based on the German dual education system, with the Beijing University. In Shanghai, it establishes the study course "International Event Management Shanghai" together with the college of Osnabrück.

Heinz-Dieter Goedecke, chief of the institute announces: "In the future, we will draw our attention to vocational training even more



"In the future, we will draw our attention to vocational training even more than previously."

Heinz-Dieter Goedecke, Chief of the China Institute

than previously." This shall contribute to the schooling of urgently needed specialists and executives for enterprises. The Chinese Institute is also a partner of the Confucius institute in Hanover, the only Confucius institute in Germany that is not bound to a college or university. Thus, it is independent and focuses on modern China. Chinese culture is more than lion dance and Beijing opera. Exhibitions in the Chinese Institute show China's modern face, the rapturous development of the country.

Best location Lüneburg

Zhao Shubin, who founded a trading company for PET bottles in 2002 in Hamburg, showed farsightedness. The commodity market started to boom, and thus, recyclable waste became more and more valuable. In order to get raw material which is especially needed for the polyester fibre industry Zhao early got in the processing of PET bottles.

"We were actually searching for a location in the Port of Hamburg", Jörg Potthast, project manager of the Plas Trade GmH, explains, "but everything would have needed more time there. We quickly found a perfect hall in Lüneburg and

all permissions concerning environment and commercial inspectorate could be arranged apace." The entrepreneur Wilfried Abramowski did not only rent the hall at short notice but he also provided enormous assistance with the setting up of a production plant by staffing and providing technical aid.

In 2005, Plas Trade could start with the recycling of PET bottles in Lüneburg. Each week, several trucks with containers full of recycled material are rolling towards the Port of Hamburg. And they are getting more and more, Plas Trade invests in Lüneburg and new locations. The revenues

increased from eight million EUR in 2006 to 10.1 million EUR in 2007.

This year, revenues of 23 million EUR are envisioned with the new location in Kerpen near Cologne. The expansion is continuing rapidly after the opening of this second plant in spring. Plas Trade is investing six million EUR in two other new plants and in the expansion of the two existing locations. In the following year, the company will try to achieve a plant capacity of a total of 100,000 tons per year, and it might then be the largest processor in this emerging industry in Germany.



Photo: Volkswagen AG

Niedersachsen: Pioneers in China

Niedersachsen companies belong to the first companies in the China business. This farsightedness was worth it. China today has many ties to Niedersachsen economy.

Niedersachsen companies belong to the pioneers of the China business. Volkswagen moved to the Middle Kingdom as early as 1985, at a time when hardly anybody could imagine the following turbulent development of the Chinese economy. This year, the people from Wolfsburg want to sell more than one million cars there, more than in Germany. Numerous suppliers from Niedersachsen followed VW and, due to the early market entry there, they have been benefiting from a profitable business for years. The internationalisation is sustained by a competent foreign trade policy and a business organisation that helps to solve smaller problems. Niedersachsen makes many good friends in China. The Chinese Minister for Research, Wan Gang, has been studying at the TU Clausthal and he has been awarded with the Niedersachsen Order of Merit. Numerous, practically oriented cooperation agreements exist with Chinese universities. Automobile techniques, mechanical engineering, environmental engineering

but also agriculture are important fields of cooperation. There, Chinese companies become more and more prevalent. At the Hanover industry fair or the CeBIT, the Chinese make up whole exhibition halls.

The importance of Chinese companies in Niedersachsen is increasing steadily.

The number of Chinese exhibitors at the IAA for commercial vehicles has more than tripled. Not only the fairs but also the exhibition corporations become more international. The Deutsche Messe AG has a share in the booming, new convention centre in Shanghai, which is one of the exhibition grounds with the highest rate of capacity utilisation worldwide. There, the people from the fair in Hanover organise their successful leading trade shows and, that way, they accompany the

internationalisation of companies from all over the world. Internationalisation is not a one-way street, so the importance of Chinese companies in Niedersachsen is increasing steadily. The Chinese are not searching for small agencies here anymore but they increasingly install service branches in order to establish themselves in Europe permanently.

Niedersachsen and the province Anhui are close-partners since 1984. This was the first official partnership of a German federal state and a Chinese province. What started out as a development cooperation at that time became an opportunity for manifold exchanges today. China is now, after the Olympic Games, focussing on sustainable development with the stress on ecology.

This reorientation presents new business chances for the technologies of Niedersachsen companies. The partnership is entering a new technological round and it demonstrates a good and solid basis for this undertaking.



Photo: posterdeluxe, Fotolia

Commercial Agents

For successful business activities in Germany the relation to commercial agents is a key issue. The drafting of a clearly defined commercial contract should be at the beginning of each business activity.



“An agent can be given a power of attorney to enter into contracts, which would bind the the represented company. In practice, such authority is seldom given.”

Ulrich Herfurth, Attorney at Law

When continuous business activity in Germany is conducted or planned, the relationship between the foreign mother company and its German distribution partners moves to the foreground. The most important classical relationships are that of the commercial agent (Handelsvertreter), the distributor (Vertragshändler), and more recently in certain sectors, also the franchise partner.

The Rules of the Commercial Code

The law of commercial agency is regulated in Germany by the Commercial Code and tends to give the commercial agent special protection. While the parties to a commercial agency agreement may agree on the applicable law, German case law pertaining to commercial agency forbids the treatment of agents in a manner which would be less favourable than that which is provided for in German law. A commercial agent is an independent business person who is authorized to secure business for and on behalf of the principal, that is the company that he represents. A commercial agent may be a legal person and may represent even more than one companies. The commercial agent is typically authorized to obtain business for the company he represents. An agent can be given a power of at-

torney to enter into contracts, which would bind the represented company. In practice, such authority is seldom given because most companies reserve for the right to accept orders. A commercial agency contract usually contains specific provisions relating to identity of the products as well as the identity of the territory in which the products are to be promoted. The commercial agency agreement does not have to be registered, licensed or notarized.

The commercial agent is usually obliged to conduct his agency duties on his own and is prohibited from sub-contracting the same.

However, the agent can be permitted to conduct his agency duties via sub-agents. The commercial agent's top priority is to pursue sales discussions and presentations. A commercial agency contract should describe in detail the duties of the agent. For example, the commercial agent should be obligated to participate in sales training, sales events and trade fairs.

Non-competition clauses in commercial agent agreements have to be carefully drafted. It is therefore important to stip-

ulate that the commercial agent is prohibited from distributing or promoting competing products in any way, whether directly or indirectly. It is however common for a commercial agent to distribute products from different companies in the event that the products complement each other or are appropriate for the same customers. Contractual agreements relating to non-competition must be in writing and limited to the existing product range and geographical scope of activity of the commercial agent. The contract should

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months' notice must be given. Longer notice periods can be agreed upon, but it has to be noted that the period of notice for the termination of the agency agreement must be equally long on the side of both contractual parties. The right to terminate

German law gives the commercial agent a right to be compensated for the customer base that the agent leaves to the company he has represented at the end of the agency relationship. The EU directive on commercial agency has introduced this principle to all member states within the European Union. The right to compensation upon termination assumes that the commercial agent has created or expanded a customer base that will benefit the company through future orders. It is not necessary for the agent to participate in future orders to become entitled to receive compensation upon termination.

The compensation for termination must be appropriate and equitable. For example, there should be no reduction of the compensation amount on the grounds that the commercial agent otherwise would get advantages that he did not enjoy in the course of the contractual relationship. The amount of the compensation is calculated according to the estimated development of orders and commissions in the future. The upper limit is one year's commissions based on the average of the last five years. While the company must take compensation payable upon termination into account in its economic calculations, this cannot be calculated as part of ordinary commissions. The company can either put aside an amount for this claim or try to transfer these costs to a new commercial agent.

About the Company

Herfurth & Partner is a full service business lawfirm specialized in international law. It consists of 20 lawyers in Hannover, including 16 international lawyers from western and eastern Europe, USA, Russia, China, India and Singapore, what is unique in Niedersachsen.

www.herfurth.de



The commercial agent should be contractually obligated to participate in sales training, sales events and trade fairs

state the basis for calculating the commission as clearly as possible together with whether the payment of the commission extinguishes any claim to reimbursement of expenses incurred by the agent.

Contracts of commercial agency usually are entered into for an indefinite period. When entered into for an indefinite period, the contract can be terminated in the first year by the provision of one month's notice. Termination in the second contract year requires a notice of at least two months, and from the third year on, three

the contract without notice on exceptional grounds is remains available to the parties. An example would be termination by reason of a material and significant breach of contract by one of the parties. For the sake of clarity, the contract should provide a list of breaches warranting termination without notice.

A contract with a limited term would retroactively become a contract with an unlimited term as soon as it continues beyond the originally intended date of termination.



Winterwonderland Niedersachsen

Pleasure and indulgence

Snowy hill tops in the Harz Mountains, stiff breezes at the North sea coast, ambient Christmas markets in the historic town districts – numerous visitors find winter to be the most beautiful season to visit Niedersachsen. After a walk through the clear, wintry air, you'll enjoy the comforts of a winterhotel. Also, wintry air leaves you hungry. After a day full of excitement you'll be treated to some fine food.

www.niedersachsen-tourism.com

Spa and Business

Health and tourism are the pillars of the modern service economy of Niedersachsen. Readiness to innovate guarantees a top position for the federal state.

Tourism and health services are an important economic factor. Carefully calculated numbers and facts state: the tourism industry alone employs 185,000 jobholders with 15 billion EUR value added. This constitutes approximately eight per cent of the gross domestic product.



Photos: Badehaus Norderney

An industry that doesn't have to fear shifting and that can be happy about investments and innovations. Mainly the small and medium-sized enterprises determine the industry's vitality and Niedersachsen's position in competition.

Niedersachsen is the leading holiday destination in Northern Germany. Considered as a whole, the East Frisian Islands, the coast, the Harz mountain range and the Lüneburg Heath are Niedersachsen's holiday des-

tinations with the most accommodation. The places with the most overnight stays in Niedersachsen are Hanover, the North Sea Islands Norderney and Borkum as well as the coastal city Cuxhaven.

Health related services give a strong economic impulse to the state's tourism. Tourism reacts to a changing awareness of the people concerning health and life style. Spa is experiencing a real boom in Niedersachsen. More than 2,300 companies with more than 7,000 employees are active in this industry. A potential that brings Niedersachsen's tourism in Germany to the top.

The industry in Niedersachsen also picks up international trends. Expressions and spa concepts that were, a couple of years ago, hardly ever heard of between the North Sea and the Harz change the traditional rehab business today.

Ayurveda, Shiatsu, Lomilomi – Indian, Japanese and Hawaiian massages are spreading quickly in Northern Germany. Thalassotherapy, hamam, Kneipp Cure, algae baths, facials: the wide range of spa services is growing and growing; and it reaches and binds new and younger target groups.

Niedersachsen's innovative tourism professionals profit from the climate, the air and the water, brine and brimstone: the federal state is provided abundantly with natural materials. From the North Sea coast to the Teutoburg Forest, from the Weserbergland to the mountain ranges in the Harz; Niedersachsen has different climatic zones to offer. You can find many curative mineral resources between the Ems and the Elbe. Mineral and moor baths, seaside resorts, Kneipp spas and spas with curative climate offer comprehensive health care and rehab programmes.



"At our resort Romantischer Winkel we provide care, experience and medical know-how individually for each guest."

Nora Oelkers, Romantischer Winkel, Bad Sachsa

People searching for therapy or recovery can find their individual health care programme in 40 therapeutic baths and spas in Niedersachsen. The suppliers of accommodation in all of the spas in Niedersachsen have adjusted to the needs of their visitors. No matter if small and friendly guesthouses or luxurious top hotels, the visitor care is matched individually to the objective of the therapy.

Nature is a partner to overcome illnesses and to strengthen the body's defences. Additionally, there is the pleasure of the magnificent Niedersachsen landscape – this provides energy for the daily routine in a modern achievement-oriented society.

With the discovery of new concepts, the tourism industry becomes also increasingly independent from the seasons.

Innovations that are based on the tradition and the nature of the federal state bring Niedersachsen's tourism forward in the national and the international competition.



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Photo: Matthias Krüttgen, Fotolia

Winter at the North Sea

You want to breathe in the healthy sea air, preferably during winter when the air is clear and fresh? Equipped with scarves, caps and gloves there's nothing that could possibly go wrong. It's a beautiful ambience that you shouldn't miss. And while drinking a nice cup of tea to warm up afterwards, you'll be able to let your thoughts stray.



Photo: Tourismusmarketing Niedersachsen

At the North sea, there's also the possibility of being close to nature and the tideland during winter.



Photo: TourismusMarketing Niedersachsen

turning ideas into holidays

inspiration niedersachsen



TourismusMarketing
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www.niedersachsen-tourism.com



Photo: Harzer Verkehrsverband e.V.

In Niedersachsen you have the choice between a lot of facilities for winter sport, as for example: cross-country skiing trails.



Photo: Snow Dome Bispingen



Photo: Snow Dome Bispingen



Photo: Harzer Verkehrsverband

Skiing in Niedersachsen

White hill tops as far as the eye can see, the sun shines through the leaves of the trees – the perfect weather for skiing. It's that exact thought that the enthusiastic skiers have, who can hardly wait to speed down the pistes. Kids pull their sledges and enjoy the wintry atmosphere.

When exhausted parents and children meet up after all that sport and hungrily eat a meal at the ski lodge, a quiet sense of magic tops the whole experience off.



Photo: Snow Dome Bispingen

The SNOW DOME Bispingen offers fun in the snow for everyone, 365 day a year: whether beginner, advanced or professional - in Europe's most modern ski hall everyone will find the perfect conditions.



Christmas market in Hanover: Enter the historic Christmas Village where a medieval scenery takes visitors back into ancient times.



Photo: Tourismusregion Celle



Photo: tourist information Hildesheim

Christmas Atmosphere

Every year at Christmas time the towns of Niedersachsen develop their own magical ambience. At this time of the year sightseeing tours are especially recommendable. Historic town centres and picturesque half timbered houses are festively decorated. Between bright lights and ancient architecture the magical world of Christmas markets charms its visitors. Lovingly decorated booths display arts and crafts as well as typical German delicacies like roasted almonds or "Lebkuchen" (gingerbread). But also cultural activities take place. Often the markets are accompanied by festive parades and amazing performances.



Photo: Flickr

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Panorama restaurants:

Panorama gourmet restaurant “Sterneck” (1 Michelin star)

Panorama restaurant “Schaarhörn” (won several awards)

In-house confectionery.



Walkable dune wine-cellar

“Best of Award of Excellence” (Wine Spectator),

“5 Flaschen” (Der Metternich).

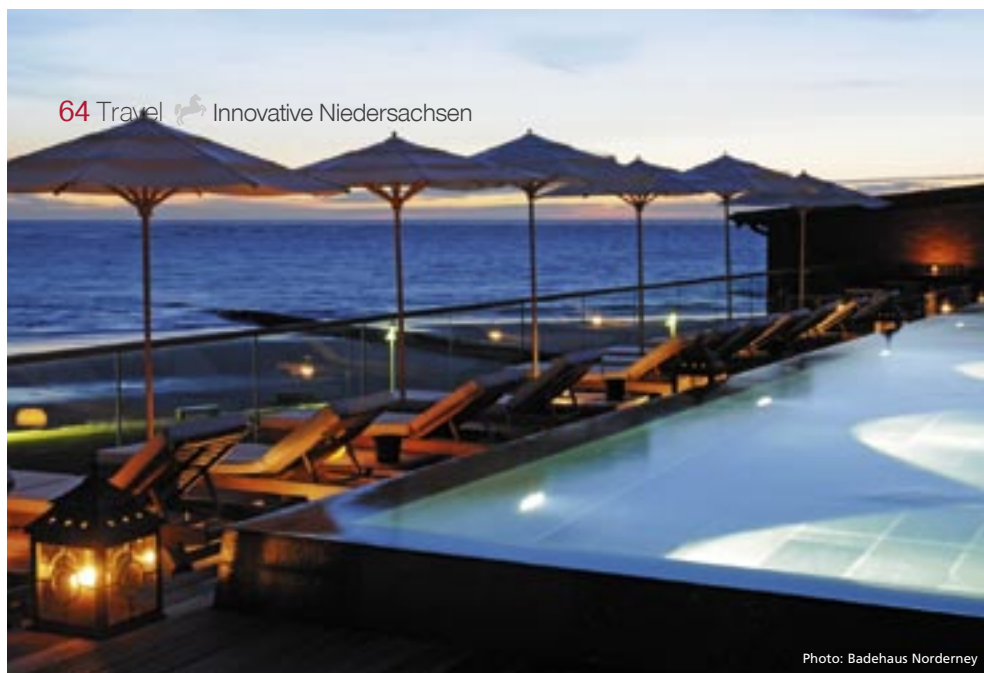


Photo: Badehaus Norderney



Photo: www.pellworm.de



Photo: Bad Zwischenahn

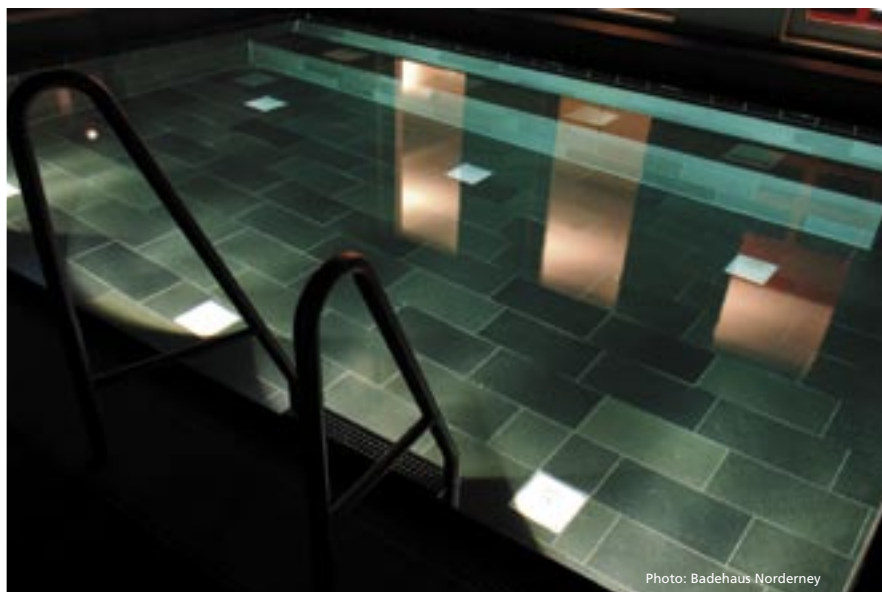


Photo: Badehaus Norderney

Wellness & Beauty

The elements sea, moorland, salt water, sulphur, air and water, created by nature, have been used by man for hundreds of years for health purposes. From health treatments to relaxation you will find some very interesting and unusual health programmes in Niedersachsen's 40 health spas. Bathing in algae, salt mud treatments or water treatments à la Kneipp, this is the right way to destress for body and soul! You'll also find traditional Chinese medicine, Far Eastern treatment methods and beauty treatments. Well trained personnel ensure an excellent all-round service.

Health spas do not just offer beautiful surroundings and friendly people, but also therapeutic competence and modern equipment.

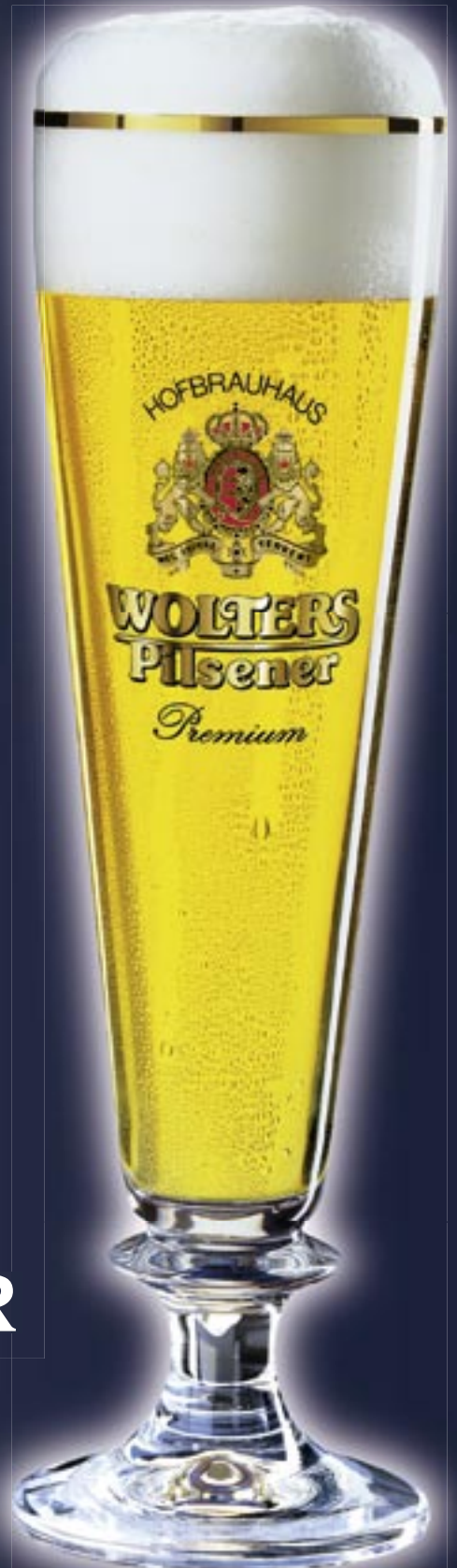


Photo: Bad Bevensen

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Istanbul: WIN World of Industry Part 2 (26.02. – 01.03.2009)

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Publisher

local global GmbH
Marienstraße 5, 70178 Stuttgart
Phone: +49 711 / 22 55 88-0
redaktion@localglobal.de
www.localglobal.de

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Cover Photo

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Print

Bosch Druck GmbH

Subscription & Advertisement

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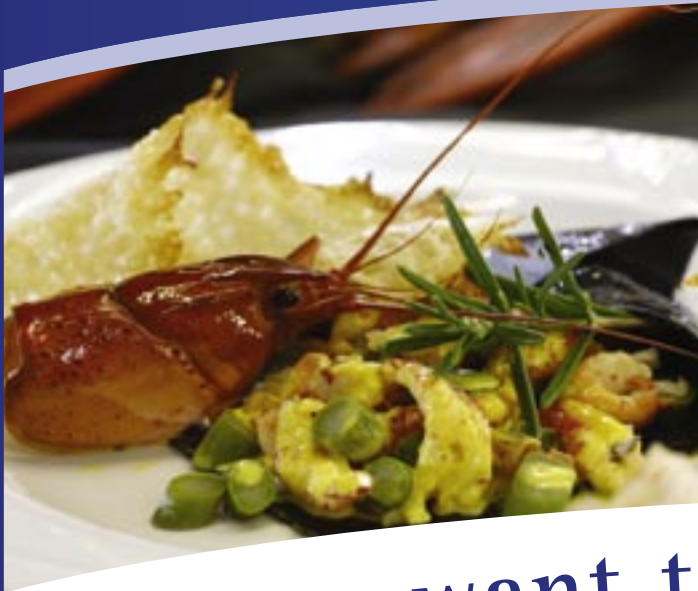


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