

Magazine for customers, employees and partners



Mercedes-Benz and Inteva thanked all of their BBG employees for their support during the creation of tools for the glass roofs of the new S Class with a letter to the management team and a live demonstration of a car from the new S Class. "Your dedication enabled us to shorten deadlines by several weeks, helping us to safeguard our supplier's delivery capacity," said the thank-you letter from Mercedes-Benz. Photo: BBG

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ERP switch-over: from nought to a hundred in six months

As the former ERP solution from Infor began to show its age, important interfaces were no longer being updated and the support available was no longer satisfactory. As a result, a decision was made to bring in new software. In the middle of last year, the industry solution from ams was chosen, as it promised to take particular account of the needs of tool and special machinery construction. After a brief preparation time of just six months, the "ams go-live experience" began for BBG at the start of January. Here are some of the things staff had to say about their experiences.

**Katja Kohlscheen,
HR Department**

In the run-up to the switch-over, Katja Kohlscheen was concerned there would be "absolute chaos", but this turned out not to be the case, allowing her to carry on with her work as normal. "All of the data was transferred on a 1:1 basis, so nothing got left behind." She is still seeing a few problems with information on receipts. In some cases, important information is still missing, which means that we have to reprocess a couple of receipts. Compared to the old software, ams makes her work easier thanks to more transparency and good usability: "The user interface is similar to that of Microsoft Office." A training course before the go-live at the end of 2013 and ongoing support have been sufficient for Katja to handle the switch-over well.

**Ingo Schroth,
Sales**

As a key user, Ingo Schroth was already involved in the decision-making process and configuration of the software, which meant he had an edge in terms of information that made the jump easier for him. His colleagues therefore value this knowledge and ask him if they need help. Many of his friends warned Ingo of problems given the very short run-up time, but he wasn't concerned. "At BBG, some things work differently from the rest of the world," he says, explaining his more relaxed attitude. He feels that the work progresses faster now, since the software is operated in a similar way to Windows programs. Familiar keyboard shortcuts such as "Copy and Paste" also work in ams. "Jobs can now be created in a structured manner more easily and more efficiently," says Schroth. The reasons: Their structure is clearer and more transparent, while coloured backgrounds on the forms create clarity and look fresher. Additional pictures make the documents more visually appealing and arouse the buyer's curiosity. Schroth finds ams easier to understand than the old ERP system, "which everyone had had enough of". The search functions are also very convenient. However there are still a few things that could be improved, with too many errors still creeping in with receipts.

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Dear Readers,

Switching ERP systems while fully operational is a little bit like carrying out heart surgery on a someone while they're going about their everyday business. The danger of everything stopping or serious complications looms relatively large. But when it comes to the switch to the new ERP system at the start of the year, we are able to calmly say that we came through it without any major problems. There are still a few niggles here and there, and it'll be some time yet before we are back on top form, but the majority of the work is done. Thanks to a joint tremendous show of strength, most of the transition to the new, future-ready ERP system is now behind us. I'd like to thank everyone for their achievements so far, and for their continued commitment.

The ERP switch-over followed a year in which BBG underwent some fairly considerable developments, and the same can be said for P-PEQ. I hope that our new subsidiary in North America will also follow the same direction from the middle of the year. All of the preparations for the founding of the subsidiary have been made, the equipment ordered, and we'll be getting started "across the Pond" in the summer. From the autumn onwards, we'll be able to serve customers in the USA, Mexico and Canada from our base in Michigan.

Enjoy your reading.

Yours,
Hans
Brandner



**Stefan Schuster,
Warehouse Section Manager**

Since moving to the Warehouse section, the ERP system has become an important tool for Stefan Schuster's work. Because he previously had very little contact with the old ERP system, he doesn't have to adjust to the new one. Schuster takes an optimistic view of his work with the ERP system. Challenges can be overcome together, because "every problem has a solution."

**Margot Schmid-Heinze,
Financial Accounting (FiBu)**

Margot Schmid-Heinze was as unfazed by her friends' and acquaintances' prophecies of doom as her colleagues were. She expected simple usability, improvements in analysis options and optimised communication with other departments. There is certainly still a lot to do, but she can use up to eighty percent of the software intuitively and her everyday work is running generally smoothly. "We were able to cre-

ate the business analysis for January straight away without any problems," says Schmid-Heinze. However some of the important modules such as cost accounting and asset accounting were still missing. It will be some time yet before she can utilise all of the ERP system's possibilities, "because we're still just starting out." If she runs into any problems, there is support available which Margot is very happy with.

**Barbara Neubauer,
Purchasing Section Manager**

Barbara Neubauer was involved with the choice and configuration right from the start. Her summary at the beginning: "It worked, as it always does at BBG, but of course familiarity and speed are yet to come. We were also used to the system working for us, but now it's the other way round and we need to look more closely at what we're doing." This leads to an appreciable increase in the amount of work involved, because lots of things have to be checked in more detail and take longer.

"We're just starting out, and there's a lot of work still ahead of us." But she is already seeing the software's benefits in terms of making work easier and more effective. It is possible, for example, to create "shopping trips", in which suppliers are assigned to specific product groups. This means that she is able to select them more quickly for an enquiry. Neubauer cites another advantage: "It's also great that we're easily able to add product drawings that we can simply download from the system to our enquiries." Although a lot is already up and running, the staff in purchasing still have a lot of work to do before they have all of the functions they need under control: "The cross-divisional data especially needs to be checked very carefully."

**Michael Späth,
Work Preparation**

"In some ways, my concerns about the short space of time we've had to prepare were justified," reports Michael Späth. In particular, the transfer of bills of material (BOMs) with the required structure,

the correct quantities and volume units has not worked well. In his view: "ams under-estimated the complexity of BBG production. There needs to be more fine tuning, we're still battling." At the same time, however, he praises the many improvements that have already been implemented: access to the work planning data is now centralised, for example, which is a good thing. The system is also very flexible, structures from the CATIA design software are now transferring well and, at the moment, it appears that the transparency of all of the processes is greater than it was with the old system. If the system could run in a stable manner, it would be possible to say much more about the production costs. "However until that point, we still need to provide a lot of input," he admits. Späth who, in addition to work preparation, is also in charge of machining planning and CNC programming, feels that the amount of work being carried out is greater during the current transitional phase than it was before the switch-over. As a result, he is hoping for more staffing resources.



Katja Kohlscheen



Photo: BBG Ingo Schroth



Photo: BBG Stefan Schuster



Margot Schmid-Heinze



Photo: BBG Barbara Neubauer



Foto: BBG Michael Späth

BBG 2014: Jump across the Pond

Although 2014 is already well underway, it's worth taking a quick look back at the end of 2013. Sales of EUR 13.1 million with a comfortable result significantly exceeded the company's expectations: the forecast was EUR 11.6 million. Orders received in mechanical engineering in particular exceeded expectations, so that the proportion of mechanical engineering sales was almost the same as it was in tool construction. The "services and retail" share reached around 7 per cent. Around three-quarters of all revenues were made abroad, making the export ratio as high as it always was, and sales to North America have increased.

For the current year, BBG is again aiming for sales of EUR 11.6 million. In tool construction, the positive

trend is expected to continue. On the other hand, mechanical engineering is expected to level out in 2014, which means that last year's record figures will not be reached.

A series of investments are in the pipeline. The extension of the technical offices on the upper floor is also at a very advanced stage. The aim is to create space for additional workstations in design, work preparation and NC programming. The installation of a small kitchen for employees from the sections that have been moved upstairs, along with the creation of height-adjustable desks, have already been completed.

BBG in North America

BBG is keen to profit more in future from the positive developments in North America. As a result, there are plans to set up an independent subsidiary in Michigan there in the summer of this year. The company there will take care of sales and service-related tasks, as well as in particular change management for tools. A 5-axis milling centre from the Taiwanese manufacturer Vision Wide has already been ordered and is set to be delivered to the site in Oxford and installed in the late summer.

Optimisation follows the ERP switch-over

In Mindelheim, the full implementation of the new ERP system will still take a degree of effort. Once the optimisations are complete, the software should be able to demonstrate its strengths and make a contribution to considerable process improvements.

Böck - one year as training supervisor: enthusiasm for learning

"My goal is for everyone to get good grades," replies Johannes Böck when asked what he would like most in his role as training supervisor. The 24-year-old trained tool engineer and qualified industrial supervisor is looking back over his first year as the commercial training supervisor of seven trainee industrial and tool engineers at BBG: "So far, I'm able to report lots of good experiences. Of course, I still need to structure my role more as I'm the first training supervisor BBG has ever had.

His enthusiasm for learning, which is why he took on the role of training supervisor over a year ago, is still as strong as ever, says Böck. Not only do the trainees regularly take part in various in-house and external training courses, but Böck also regularly attended courses in order to keep his own technical skills completely up to date: "Training is a key concern for me, for the trainees and for myself as a training supervisor." He is also involved with the "School and Business" working group, which promotes dialogue between representatives of schools and businesses in relation to training. Böck is able to exchange experiences with other trainers at these events.

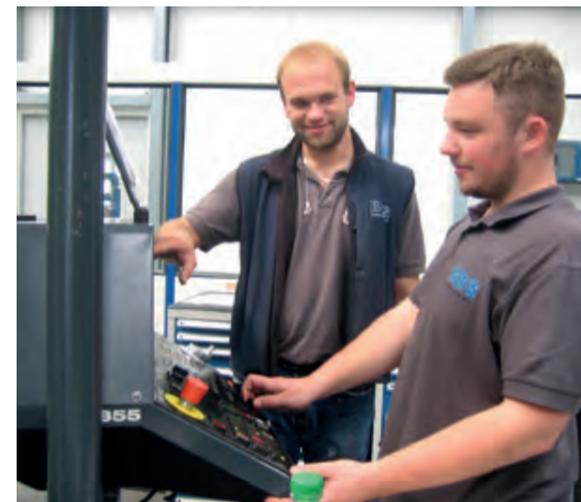
Emphasis on the personal encouragement of trainees

Böck doesn't just structure his training rigidly around the training curriculum; instead, he addresses each individual's needs. If he notices that a trainee is struggling with something, or if they ask for help, he offers support: "If someone is finding milling or turning difficult, for example, I explain the process again and I stand next to the machine while they're

practising. We then practise until they've got the hang of it and the trainee feels confident."

The first twelve months as training supervisor have been as he expected, says Böck. During his time as a skilled worker, he had also been thinking about the best ways to communicate content and make training as effective as possible. He's now endeavouring to put these thoughts into practice.

For Böck, it is crucial that the trainees have all the theoretical and practical skills they need to do their jobs properly: "That's why it's important to practice a lot. It's the only way that trainees can progress their skills." It's also important that trainees work together in realistic conditions in the production area, says Böck: "Everyone is challenged together there, and our skilled workers of the future can learn a trick or two from our experienced staff."



Individual support for each individual trainee is important for Johannes Böck, shown here in a photo with Maximilian Rödiger. Photo: BBG

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Their own teaching workshop as a meeting point and place of learning

Since mid-February, the commercial trainees have been using the open teaching workshop as their own space and meeting point. "One of the advantages is that older and younger trainees come together in a single place, so that one can explain things to the other," reports Johannes Böck. Instead of sitting in meeting rooms, there is now a defined starting point in which all of the information and training documents can be found.



Johanna Höbel and Jonas Schobeß in the learning workshop. Photo: BBG

Johanna Höbel and Jonas Schobeß, both 18 years old and toolmakers in their second year of study, list other positive points: "Because we're here quite a lot, we don't keep our colleagues from their work as much," says Höbel. Her fellow trainee Schobeß is also pleased by the fact that: "It's also quieter, and everything we need for training is right here."

Stefan Schuster: Lots of ideas in store

"The offer to take the job came as a complete surprise," reports Stefan Schuster, who has been the new Warehouse Section Manager since the start of the year. The 50-year-old, who has been with BBG for around 17 years, never even dreamed that he would one day thank the warehouse for his ascent of the career ladder. "It took a while to sink in," says Schuster. With his wife, he calmly thought through his options and whether he wanted to take on the challenge. He had never been a manager with responsibility for staff before, and he was also aware of the fact that rejoining the CNC milling shop with programming would be very difficult for him in view of the rapid pace of technological progress over the next few years. So he said yes.

Right from the start, Schuster tackled the job with tremendous motivation, and he has a lot of ideas on how to improve things. He's very happy with the way things have gone so far: "I love the work; I made the right decision." He's already started clearing out and redesigning the warehouse. For the first time, he was part of the team that attended the Goals Conference, where "his" subject of warehouse organisation was discussed. "Bringing in changes here is something I'm very passionate about," he admits. And his treasure trove of ideas for improvement is far from nearing exhaustion. Says Schuster: "Goods inwards and outwards, order picking and stocking doesn't always



Stefan Schuster Photo: BBG

smoothly, so there are still a few things that can be made faster and simpler." Whereas previously he was always sitting down programming in the milling shop, now he's constantly on the move. "After a disc prolapse, it's a great benefit for my back and my health in general," says the new section manager delightedly. There's every indication that, after six months of trying the role out, he will be staying in the warehouse section permanently.

His own race car

Given the additional work involved with learning a new job and the launch of the ERP system, there isn't much time at the moment for hobbies. Normally, Schuster spends his free time either near a race track or in his own workshop where, over the last few years, he has restored a Ford "furlong racing car". He takes the vintage 180 HP car built in 1932 to drag races that cover a furlong, or 201.17 metres. The car is even roadworthy, thanks to its TÜV badge. He also likes riding his Ducati, putting in laps in the Motodrome on the Hockenheimring or on Italy's Mugello.

Five new employees

BBG idea is extending a warm welcome to no fewer than five new employees. A brief introduction to our new colleagues is provided below:

Jürgen Oelkers retired in 2013 from his post as Regional Manager for Southern Germany and Austria from his previous employer Hennecke – and started at BBG in October of last year. Working part time, he now supports the sales team, calling on the contacts he has built up over decades. Oelkers and BBG have known each other for some time already, as the new sales manager was involved with the first Innovation Day in 2006 and was a key initiator in the cooperation between his old and new employers.



Joseph Biagui, who was born in Senegal and who is a trained automation technology electronics engineer, has also been with the BBG team since the start of the year. The 39-year-old father with a young daughter is a keen traveller and enjoys many field deployments as a service engineer.



Sascha Finke, 31, is a trained mechanical engineering technician and also joined BBG on the 7th of January. After his former employer in Memmingen was bought out by a major company, he was worried about the short pathways and flat hierarchies he was used to and which he valued. With BBG being a family-owned company, the Mindelheim-born technician found his new challenge as a designer in tool construction.



Stephan Barton has been engaged as a working student at his parents' company since the 2013 winter semester. The 21-year-old trained electronics engineer in automation technology is reading production and automation at the University of Munich and is gathering comprehensive practical experience at BBG.



Richard Ortloff has also been part of the team since the start of 2014. The 48-year-old mechanical engineer previously worked in special machinery construction for enveloping machines. His trainee programme at BBG runs until October, preparing him for his duties as a departmental manager in mechanical engineering.



all pictures Photo: Rhode

BBG wishes all of them the best of luck!

Hans Wurm: New challenge

According to Hans Wurm, he's never felt afraid of taking responsibility. And so it didn't take him long to decide to take on the role of Tool Assembly Section Manager: "Before someone I don't know stands in front of me and tells me what to do, I'd rather do it myself."

But that wasn't by any means the only reason for his decision. The trained model constructor has been with BBG for 37 years and knows the company very well. For many years now, he has been working in tool finishing, always in close collaboration with the milling shop and tool assembly department. So it seemed natural for his supervisor Alois Hoyer to put him forward for the role of section manager. His colleagues also supported him: "We know each other, and my colleagues know how I work. That's why they said I should do it," says Wurm. "Also, it makes sense to fill management positions with someone who's already with the company. It means that knowledge can be passed on more easily. The transition from one generation to the next is smoother too, because you know how your predecessors did things."

Back to school after 37 years in work

Since the start of October, Wurm spent six months of induction and probation under the supervision of old hand Alois Hoyer, who is looking to gradually step down his activities over the next few years. "I'm going back to school, if you will," smiles Wurm: "In other words, I'm

familiarising myself with things, but I'm able to ask Luis if ever anything isn't clear." Both he and Alois are using the time until Alois's well-earned retirement to pass on his wealth of experience from one generation to the next. The 'apprentice' feels very fortunate: "It helps me no end, and Luis is delighted that I'm able to use his advice."

Same company, new challenge

The career opportunity came at just the right moment. After such a long time with the company, Wurm states he didn't necessarily want to move to another firm, and so his internal promotion became



Hans Wurm Photo: BBG

exactly the challenge he wanted. Other work came too: his new tasks also include office work, but it's nowhere near as bad as he'd feared.

He enjoys contact with suppliers and customers very much, says the long-term BBG employee, because it's not something he used to do much of in the past. He's needed in tool design too, where he's able to contribute his specialist expertise. He's also involved with management committees. Carrying out staff appraisals and choosing suitable candidates for new appointments are all responsibilities that Wurm relishes: "My decision-making freedom is greater, but I'm coping with it OK and, as I said, I can always ask for advice at any time."

Facing the new year with motivation

After the end of his probationary period, the assessment is good. "So far, everything has gone well," says Wurm. "I can't complain." For 2014, he's set himself the goal of managing his tasks as well as he possibly can, and he feels confident in his abilities. With three employees from assembly and four employees from finishing, he's also keen to look into improvements together and, where possible, implement them. He'd also like to get more training: "It might be quite useful for me to get more experience in English. Then I'd be able to communicate more easily with my colleagues from P-PEQ and our foreign clients," says Wurm.

Better and faster service

At the start of the year, P-PEQ launched a service office in Shanghai. This was in response to demand from its Asian clients, who expect short lead times and fast, local service. Christian Fritz, Managing Director of P-PEQ, has clear objectives: "The new service office is intended to allow us to respond quickly and offer significantly better customer service." By opening this office, P-PEQ is hoping to improve customer satisfaction and increase their loyalty to the firm. Over the long term, P-PEQ also anticipates the move to bring in additional orders. Says Fritz: "For P-PEQ itself and for BBG as a whole, there is an opportunity to win new clients by stepping up our sales activities in the Shanghai region."

Shanghai - an attractive location

Back in September 2013, P-PEQ created a concept for a new office. One month later, the right premises had been found: a facility spanning just under 290 square metres in the Minhang district, an industrial part of the city. The location is especially advantageous thanks to the excellent infrastructure locally: right nearby are the airport, railway, bus, tram

system and Shanghai's harbour. The proximity to major clients such as Webasto Shanghai, Fuyao Shanghai, Hennecke and Saint Gobain was also crucial in the choice of location. These four key customers can all be reached in half an hour. The new site shortens transport routes considerably, which means that tool modifications for customers in the Shanghai region can be carried out with much shorter lead times.

Service expansion for the south of China

From its base in Shanghai, P-PEQ is keen to primarily serve clients from the Shanghai region and the south of China. Clients from the north of the country will continue to be served by the office in Changchun. P-PEQ currently employs two people at the new site. Over the course of the year, four further employees will be added to cover sales, administration and production. To make changes to tools locally and at short notice, and in order to handle smaller projects directly, a 3-axis milling machine will soon be commissioned at the Shanghai office.

DIN EN ISO 9001-guaranteed quality

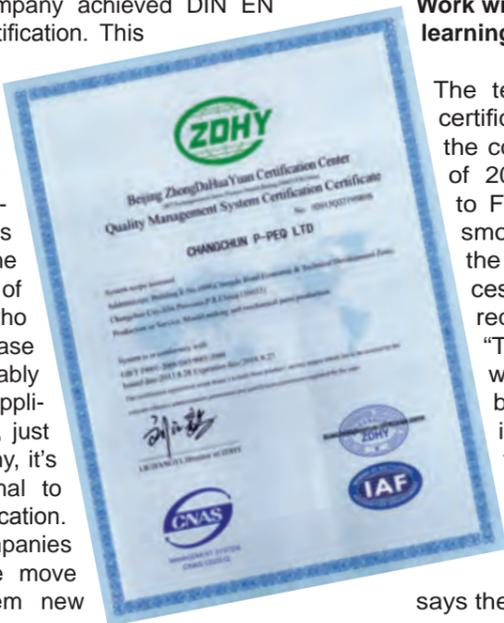
P-PEQ has enjoyed success in relation to quality management: on 28 August 2013, the company achieved DIN EN ISO 9001 certification. This

allows the Chinese subsidiary to pursue two goals: to safeguard its own quality standards and satisfy the requirements of customers who can only purchase from suitably accredited suppliers. "In China, just like in Germany, it's perfectly normal to undergo certification. Many companies hope that the move will bring them new

customers," says Fritz.

Work with a huge learning effect is rewarded

The team worked on the certification process over the course of the summer of 2013, and, according to Fritz, everything went smoothly. Nevertheless, the creation of new processes and workflows required a lot of work. "The hard work was worth it, however, because everyone involved learned a lot from the process too. The process also strengthens the employees' understanding of quality," says the General Manager.



P-PEQ rewards employees' ideas

There's quite a lot going on at the Chinese subsidiary P-PEQ, including: the introduction of ideas management, a new service office in Shanghai and ISO EN 9001 certification for quality assurance - and these are just some of the important new developments.

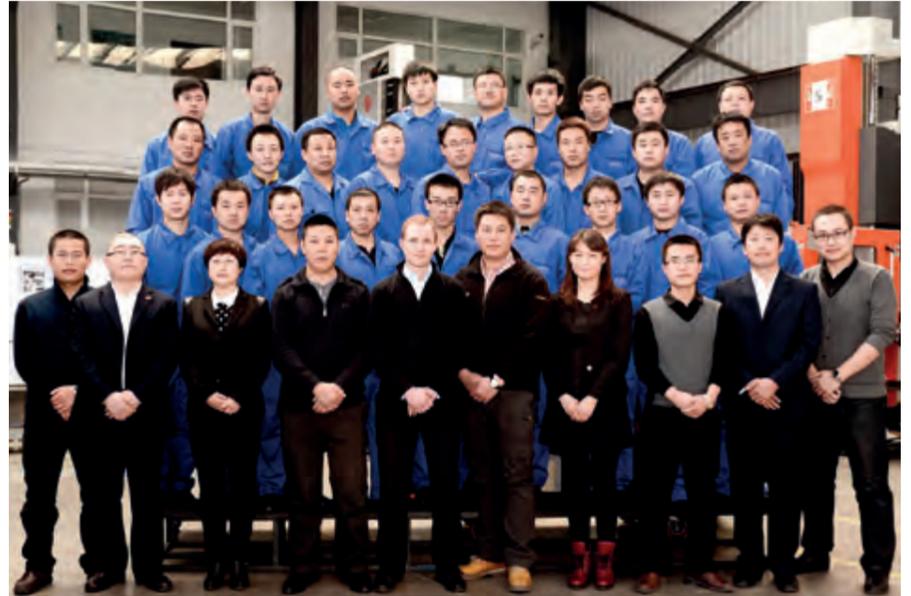
Innovative ideas for P-PEQ, more motivation for employees

Ideas management is a standard element of modern human resources. Since October 2013, P-PEQ has also been using this tool at the Changchun

are like." The management team then assesses the ideas, calculates the potential savings and then calculates the reward for the employee.

New light switches and hygienic chopsticks

"Employees have responded positively so far to this offer of integration and have shown a lot of dedication to it. A number of good ideas have already come to light," says Fritz, delightedly. "We've equipped the lights in the recreation rooms with an automatic shut-



Motivated and professional - the P-PEQ team

Photo: P-PEQ

office in China to recruit its employees for active commitment within the company and at the same time reduce costs for the firm. As always, both sides benefit from the scheme. "Good ideas that help the company progress are rewarded financially," explains Christian Fritz, General Manager at P-PEQ in Changchun.

"Ideas management originally comes from the European/American region. But that doesn't make any difference to its implementation in China," says Fritz. "What matters is that the suggestions can initially be submitted to the management team anonymously via an ideas box. This means that nobody feels prevented from suggesting something, no matter what their role within the company or what the hierarchies

off function, for example, because everybody always forgets to switch the light off when they leave. This might sound like a small thing, but looking at the costs over the year, it's a huge saving." Good ideas don't always relate to material things, however, says the General Manager: "One employee improved the human climate with his idea for more hygiene. Unhygienic wooden chopsticks were replaced with washable plastic ones."

The management team of P-PEQ anticipates more than just financial gains from the involvement of its workforce. "We are also hoping that employees will stay with the company longer. Ideas management is intended to help them feel that each individual can contribute to the company's success," says Fritz.

Goals conference: at the right time

Under the motto "Information and Parts at the Right Time in the Right Place", the BBG Goals Conference was held from the 13th to the 15th of March. The key points of the meeting, moderated by Martina Barton, between directors, departmental managers and section managers, included the preassembly of modules in mechanical engineering and the organisation of various warehouses in production.

And because the topic of the conference was very challenging, Martina Barton had chosen a distinctly playful opening event, which nevertheless focused the delegates' attention directly on the crux of the matter. The delegates were divided up into three teams. Each team was given a motorcycle model construction kit made out of Lego, with which they were to create three different motorbikes. The task for each team was to

prepare themselves so that the model version that would later be ordered at short notice could be created as quickly as possible.

Preassembly in mechanical engineering as a real example

One and a half hours later, the three teams presented their preparations for the shortest possible lead time. After lively discussion of the different approaches, the practical trials began: the motorbike order came in. The results were very close - all three teams completed the assembly of their Lego model between 14 and 18 minutes.

The background to the task is the situation in BBG's mechanical engineering division. In some cases, assemblies are already pre-made, but the interaction of all the processes from design to warehouse still needs some improvement. Pre-assembly in modules is not something that can currently be implemented perfectly yet. The discussion at the Goals Conference provided a major kick-off for processes to be coordinated more efficiently with each other.

Optimisation of warehouses

Closely connected to the subject of pre-assembly in modules was the second item on the agenda: the organisation of warehouses. Until now, there have been very differently-organised warehouses in production. A standardised stock management system in the warehouses in the production areas is only possible with considerable work, and the results are still inadequate. It's leading to repeated back-and-forth actions in procurement because the stocks in the ERP system don't actually match the stocks in the warehouse.

Here too, there was a specific success. The delegates agreed to restructure the warehouse systems in production. Frequently used small parts of lower value need to be placed in easy-to-reach manual warehouse bays. Top-ups need to be safeguarded by stocks in the main warehouse with minimum quantity monitoring. The agreed measures are intended to make the work associated with posting and provision much easier without causing any noticeable restrictions in availability or cost transparency.



On the search for the best route.

Photo: BBG